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THE CHARACTER TYPES IN THE OLD FRENCH *CHANSONS DE GESTE*

BY

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THE CHARACTER TYPES IN THE OLD FRENCH *CHANSONS DE GESTE.*

Introduction.

"Le moyen âge forme un anneau indispensable dans la chaîne de la transmission littéraire à travers les siècles."—Gaston Paris, *Cosmopolis*, Sept., 1898.

Three-quarters of a century has elapsed since the mediæval epic literature of France first attracted the attention of scholars. This interval has been marked by an uninterrupted succession of texts discovered and edited. The value of these texts to the student of language is great; their value to the historian of politics and society is considerable;[1] but their literary bearing has not been sufficiently emphasized. To this day the general public has but a vague idea of the character and significance of that national epic of which the *Chanson de Roland* is the highest expression

[1] Cf. P. Meyer, *Bull. annuaire de la Soc. de l'hist. de France*, v. xxvii, pp. 82–106; G. Paris, *Romania*, v. xxii, p. 145; Charles Potvin, *Nos premiers siècles litt.*, v. i, p. 26.

and which Léon Gautier strove so bravely to render popular.[1] The mediæval literature of France has not yet completely recovered from the reputation of vulgarity given to it by the Renaissance.

Ticknor, in speaking of the *Poema del Cid*, remarks that we read it "for its living pictures of the age it represents and for the vivacity with which it brings up manners and customs so remote from our own experience that when they are attempted in formal history, they come to us as cold as the fables of mythology."[2] These words express admirably the charm exercised by the old French *chansons de geste* upon the mind of the student who wanders at will among their treasures. These poems, at first sight so monotonous and so crude, are really the living expression of the society which produced them. They throb with the pulse of the changing political, social, and literary conditions of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. When we recall the importance of these centuries in the pre-Renaissance literature of France, we marvel that so little has been written to make clear the place of the epic poems in the evolution of French literature. If "the Middle Age is an indispensable link in the chain of literary transmission," surely we should seek in the national epic some reflection of the development of French nationality and literary art.

With this end in view scholars have made many detailed studies of individual poems and of certain historical characters therein treated. These studies have been of a historical and critical rather than of a literary nature. Now that a considerable number of *chansons de geste* have been edited in a fairly definitive form, the time has come for a comprehensive appreciation of their value conceived from a purely

[1] Cf. *Revue des Questions hist.*, v. ii, p. 329; *Bibliothèque de l'Ecole des Chartes*, v. LX (mars–juin, 1899).

[2] Ticknor, *History of Spanish Literature*, v. i, p. 15.

literary point of view. We have a right to ask what was the message of these long poems to their age, and what is the literary inheritance they have left to us in these latter days. Truly contemporary with the age which produced them they surely are. Yet, in spite of the wide gulf of changed conditions which separate us from them, we recognize in the *dramatis personae* of the *chansons de geste* men and women of like passions with ourselves, trusting in the same eternal forces which make for goodness, and tempted by the same evils which assail mankind in all generations.

The human interest of the French epic poems, as revealed in the actors in these mediæval dramas, has never been lost from sight in the writing of the following pages. Our study is not philological in any sense; it is historical only in a broad sense; it does, however, seek to throw fresh light upon the literary ideals and execution of our mediæval ancestors. The method to be followed, then, will clearly be of an expository character. The poems themselves will be allowed to present the evidence; we shall but draw the patent conclusions. Much will be taken for granted, as requiring no further proof beyond that already adduced by experts in the neighboring field of historical criticism. But an earnest effort will be made to get nearer to the mind and art of feudal society in its last phase, to determine the forces at work which produced this rich literature, which enabled it to hold its popularity for three centuries, and which finally account for its failure as an expression of contemporary ideals.

Such an exposition as we here anticipate would have little bearing upon our knowledge of the literary sense of the Middle Age, were it not that we assume the mediæval poet-historian to have been in close contact with his audience. Between the *jongleur* and his auditors there was a perfect understanding. His livelihood depended upon his

success as a purveyor of acceptable entertainment, in which each auditor might feel his share. Thus, whatever the original subject of the poem, the treatment of it was a response to contemporary taste and requirements. Only so could perfect harmony exist between the story-teller and his audience. Moreover, the former's appeal in these poems is not to the romantic and the marvelous, but to the historical and the true. Our *jongleur* angrily disclaimed the reputation of a wonder-working magician, but insistently asserted his devotion to veracity. It is intended, then, here to study the literary art of the Middle Age from a new view-point; more specifically, to watch the *trouvère* as he handles the traditional epic material.

The new view-point has been found in the characters which figure in the *chansons de geste*. Their conventionality and unvarying recurrence enable us, without violence, to divide them conveniently into types. Each type of character will be studied chronologically, so far as possible, and the significance of its evolution will be noted. With the belief that such an exposition along six different lines will contribute to our knowledge of the mediæval man in his relation to literary expression, we pass to our examination of the poems themselves.

The King.

It is not our purpose under this heading to reconsider the facts so carefully exposed by Gaston Paris in *L'histoire poétique de Charlemagne*. But the figure of the great Emperor dominates to a great degree the whole body of the poetry which occupies our attention. It is with his epic personality and with his far-reaching activities that other persons and events are brought into relation. A study of the personages in the French epic necessarily begins with Charlemagne.

It was the purpose of Gaston Paris to trace the poetic history of Charlemagne through the epic poetry not only of France, but of those countries into which the French epic material penetrated. He has classified the legends, many of them of local origin, which grew up in regard to the birth, marriage, conquests and pilgrimages of the Emperor. These were the matters of prime interest to a feudal audience, and it was upon these events that the imagination of the *trouvères* loved to dwell. "Les milieux populaires ne s'intéressent aux affaires publiques que par rapport à leur côté individuel et personnel. C'est le héros qui passionne le peuple, ce ne sont pas les destinées nationales dont il a la responsabilité, ni les graves intérêts qui reposent sur sa tête."[1] In spite, however, of the vagaries and palpable inaccuracies resulting from popular treatment, one is astonished in reading *L'histoire poétique* by the general accord of history and legend. This, too, is the conclusion recorded by Paris at the close of his long study.

The accord of history and poetry interests us, however, very little just now. For it is not of Charlemagne as an historical personage that we are thinking. It is rather of a king as an impersonal figure and of the rôle that is assigned to him in a body of poetry which supposedly expresses very accurately the sentiments of the public for whom it was cast into shape. If in this poetry the king is exalted far above the people, if he dwells in an atmosphere almost exclusively his own, it may be supposed that in fact the ideal of a king at that period was held in sufficient reverence to permit such a literary presentation. If, on the other hand, the figure of the king is not at all epic in character, if his arm is shortened, his prerogatives scorned and his majesty only unwillingly admitted, we must suppose the influence of the

[1] Kurth, *Histoire poétique des Mérovingiens*, p. 226.

great vassals at work. The literary elevation or humiliation of the king considered relatively to that of his great vassals forms the interest of a study of the royal personage. For, as Luchaire has said: "L'histoire politique de la France pendant la plus grande partie du moyen âge peut se résumer dans la lutte soutenue par le pouvoir royal contre la féodalité." [1]

Rajna [2] and Kurth [3] have proved that tradition had busied itself with some of the Merovingian kings. But by the time when our literary period opens the Carolingian dynasty had taken to itself all the traditions of former times. With the exception of Clovis in *Floovant*, we meet only the names of Charles, Pepin and Louis as applied to the king of France. The latter two names owe their distinction respectively to the father and the son of Charles the Great. So absorbing was the personality of the great Emperor that all other Charles' became confounded with him,[4] just as Pepin the father of Charlemagne absorbed Pepin the father of Charles Martel, and Louis the son of Charlemagne caused the oblivion of all the other Louis'. This process of centralization is one of the most familiar features of popular poetry. The author of *Doon de Maience* felt the confusion of identity to which it gave rise when he wrote:

> "Segnurs, vous savés bien, et je en sui tous fis,
> Que plusors Kalles ot (chà arrier) à Paris,
> A Nerbonne la grant ot plusors Aymeris,
> Et à Orenge rot maint Guillaume marchis,
> Et si rot maint Doon à Maience jadis."
>
> *Doon de Maience*, p. 201.

It is not necessary to account for Charlemagne's promi-

[1] A. Luchaire, *Histoire des Institutions Monarchiques de la France sous les premiers Capétiens, 987–1180;* vid. *Préface.*

[2] *Origini dell' epopea francese.*

[3] *Histoire poétique des Mérovingiens.*

[4] Cf. Rajna, *Origini*, p. 199 f.

nence in the epic poetry of the Middle Age. His learning, his imperial dignity, his defense of the Church against Mahometan invasion,—all these qualifications guaranteed for Charlemagne first rank among his country's rulers. Of these three historical qualifications, the first, naturally, left hardly a trace in the epic treatment of the Emperor. It is an exceptional note,—that of Charles the mediæval scholar:

> "L'ampereor troverent an son palais marbrin.
> L'apostoilles li conte la vie Saint Martin,
> Et devise la letre et espont le latin."
>
> *Chanson des Saisnes*, v. i, pp. 64, 65.

So also *Renaus de Montauban*, p. 161. To his claim as political organizer, as divinely protected Roman Emperor, however, full justice was done. The memory of the imperial power of the historical Charlemagne contributed potently to the original majesty of the epic king of France. But it was Charles the warrior, the right arm of the Church, the valiant defender of Christendom against pagan and Infidel invasion that comes most prominently into view.[1] For the attention of a society which made fighting its principal occupation was necessarily devoted almost exclusively to the battlefield and to those heroic contests which the Emperor and his faithful vassals waged in the defense of France and of Christendom. This is the scene displayed when the curtain goes up in the *Chanson de Roland*, the earliest *chanson de geste* that has been preserved.

Before turning to the poems themselves for evidence, it should be stated here what we intend to show: that there were three distinct treatments of the royal personage in the epic poems. Whether he be called Charles, Pepin or Louis,

[1] For the literature based upon Charles' personal religious enthusiasm cf. G. Paris, *Hist. poêt.*, and Gerhard Rauschen, *Die Legende Karls des Grossen im xi und xii Jahrhundert.*

the king undergoes a literary transformation,—a degeneration,—which we must explain in advance upon historical and literary grounds.

We shall see that in the earliest poems the king's rôle is grandiose and epic to the full. Somewhat more than man, he is less only than God. Through the rallying of his Christian knights he is God's agent upon earth for the casting down of the strongholds of anti-Christ. Full of dignity and protected by divine favor he assists at the deeds of his undaunted and trusty vassals,—trusty all save one who shall betray him. To these vassals he is in almost the relation of father to son, and to him all give the affection and reverence which is his due.

To produce this primitive conception of the royal person the Church writers contributed in common with the part actually played by Charlemagne in the defense of Europe against the Saracens. The Church writers had their own reasons for emphasizing the reputed piety of the great Emperor and for elaborating it into a sort of saintly example which the later sovereigns should follow. On the other hand, even after all danger in Western Europe had long passed away and the fierce hatred against the followers of the Prophet was appeased, the epic poems continue to represent the Emperor as the divinely appointed bulwark of Christianity against the Infidels. These two influences, then, working contemporaneously, the one ecclesiastical and the other distinctly popular, combined to develop that conception of the king as viceroy of God in the conflict of the French with the Saracens which is in progress in the *Roland*.

We come now to the second manner of treatment. The primitive conception of the king, at once noble and naïve, inevitably underwent an alteration. When one considers how small and relatively mean were Charles' successors until the Capetian house waxed strong and flourished, it is

not surprising that the literary portrait of the king lost in grandeur and dignity. In this second period interest centres in the increasingly strained relations of the king to the great vassals. The process of centralization is going steadily forward. The Capetian monarchs are strengthening their position at the expense of the ancient feudal prerogatives. Now, the sentiment of the feudal lords is directly reflected in the poems of this second period. Political and social problems are regarded almost exclusively from their point of view. From this point of view, hostile to the monarch, the latter is sometimes a king in deed; but more often he is recognized as but the nominal head, subject in all respects to the opinion of his powerful vassals and depending upon them for material aid. Henri Martin,[1] in some remarks upon the *Chanson de Roland* has explained this, at first unexpected, discrepancy between the historical facts and the literary treatment. As the king's power and the Capetian idea of centralization supported by the newly awakened *bourgeoisie* took root during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, so the jealousy of the great feudal lords increased. This natural feeling is vividly manifested in the literary treatment accorded to the king in the poems of the second period. The king is now often represented as a tottering old man no longer able to defend his possessions, or as a young upstart whose inexperience makes him the laughing-stock of his more tried advisers. Artistically considered, this is a sad degeneration. One regrets the masterful epic traits of the *Roland*. But this very critical and often scornful vein in the later poems proves what is of essential importance: that the king was ever human; that he was tempted even as other men are tempted; and that he was criticised for incompetence or unfaithfulness in the perform-

[1] *Histoire de France*, v. iii, p. 345.

ance of those duties imposed upon the head of a feudal state. With the possible exception of that first exalted note in the *Roland* there is perhaps no trace of that spirit which tends to raise the king above his people and to make him one of those favored creatures who occupy the middle space between man and the gods. Nowhere is the French epic more intensely human, more historically accurate, when trespassing upon dangerous ground than in its conception of the leader of the people.[1]

The middle of the twelfth century in France saw the introduction of the Breton cycle, soon to be made popular throughout Europe by the romances of Chrestien de Troyes. One result of the Celtic influence was that the songs of national achievement were converted into biographies of individual heroes. This entailed the banishment of the king to a still more obscure position in the latest epic poems. The shadow of a Frankish king, however, is still there, and the events narrated in even the late poems are uniformly brought into touch with the great epic family of the king and his Peers. The latest poems do not offer us much material for a historical study of the monarchy. The interest in the struggle of king and vassal weakens before the charm of personal adventure and chivalric sentiment. The king in these poems is nothing more than a political necessity. From a literary point of view his importance is *nil.* He is only a fixed point of support, on which the leading characters in the story are made to lean,—a lay figure about whom the action moves without involving him.

This much having been said of the literary suppression of the king, we may now turn to the poems themselves for confirmation of the fact.

[1] Chè io non so se vi sia cosa più notevole nella nostra epopea di quel suo carattere schiettamante storico ed umano, che pare accentuarsi viepiù quanto più si risale addietro "—Rajna, *Origini*, p. 455.

The first appearance of the king is in the well-known scene in the *Roland* where *Carles li reis, nostre emperere magnes* receives the Saracen ambassadors. The scene is in every way worthy of this epic personage:

> "Desuz un pin, delez un eglentier,
> Un faldestoed i out fait tut d'or mier,
> Là siet li reis qui dulce France tient;
> Blanche ad la barbe e tut flurit le chief,
> Gent ad le cors e le cuntenant fier.
> S'est qui l' demandet, ne l'estoet enseignier."
>
> *Roland*, 114–119.

This is the picture of the mature dignity of the King surrounded by his Peers uniformly presented in this poem. These Peers, better known as destroyers of the Infidel, form as well a body of advisers, without whose counsel even the great Charles takes no measure of state. Thus, when the proposition of Marsile is under consideration:

> "Li empereres s'en vait desuz un pin,
> Ses baruns mandet pur sun cunseill fenir."
>
> *Id.*, 168–169.

The method of procedure is somewhat strange. Free expression was given to all opinions, whether good or bad, whether trustworthy or treacherous. Although the King was bound to follow the best sense of his counsellors, of whom Naimon was the chief, yet he could suppress any individual at will. Thus when *Turpins de Reins en est levez del renc* (v. 264) it might be expected that the King would listen with deference to the archbishop's proposition. On the contrary, he cuts him off:

> "'Alez sedeir desur cel palie blanc;
> N'en parlez mais, se jo ne l' vus cumant.'"
>
> *Id.*, 272–273.

Important for the personal character of the epic king

are the words of Ganelon in reply to Marsile's curiosity. Ganelon, who was never prompted by personal animosity to the King, resented the insinuation of old age and general weakness made against Charles by Marsile. He replied:

"'Carles n'est mie tels.
N'est hum qui l' veit e conuistre le set,
Que ço ne diet que l'emperere est ber.
Tant ne l' vus sai ne preiser ne loer
Que plus n'i ad d'onur e de bontet.
Ses granz valurs qui s' purreit acunter?
De tel barnage l'ad Deus enluminet,
Mieilz voelt murir que guerpir sun barnet.'"

Id., 529–536.

As for Charles' valor, Ganelon has already confided to the crafty Blancandrin:

"'Itels est sis curages;
Jamais n'iert hum qui encuntre lui vaille.'"

Id., 875–876.

The personal relation which existed between the King and his warriors, mentioned in v. 536, is well illustrated in the following passage:

"'Seignur barun, jo vus aim, si vus crei;
Tantes batailles avez faites pur mei,
Regnes cunquis e desordenet reis!
Bien le conuis que gueredun vus dei
E de mun cors, de terres e d'aveir.
Vengiez voz filz, voz freres e voz heirs
Qu'en Rencesvals furent ocis hier seir!
Ja savez vus cuntre paiens ai dreit.'"

Id., 3406–13.

It is not strange that in a time of great danger Charles should be visited by dreams which warn him. Since he is the servant of God, he is cared for by the divine agents (v. 717 f.; v. 725 f.; v. 2525 f.; v. 2555 f.). But if the King received warning as a privileged individual, he soon rued his carelessness like an ordinary mortal. The descrip-

tion of his grief upon leaving Roland behind emphasizes his human weakness and despair which must have forcibly impressed his followers:

> "Li emperere s'en repairet en France,
> Suz sun mantel enfuit la cuntenance."
>
> *Id.*, 829–830.

His sorrow is contagious among his emotional followers:

> "Carles li magnes ne poet muer n'en plurt.
> C. milie Franc pur lui unt grant tendrur,
> E de Rollant merveilluse poür."
>
> *Id.*, 841–843.

When Charles hears the mighty blast blown by Roland in his agony, he at once recognizes the danger of his nephew. But Ganelon fearlessly says:

> "'De bataille est nient.
> Ja estes vus vieilz e fluriz e blancs,
> Par tels paroles vus resemblez enfant.'"
>
> *Id.*, 1770–72.

These last words of Ganelon are significant, because they betray a reaction against the majesty of the king's character, which reaction must have been tacitly admitted even before the *Roland*. There can be hardly any doubt that the earliest songs about the great Emperor represented him as quite faultless and heroic in every way. But owing to feudal jealousy under later kings this sentiment was early undermined, and a mental condition bordering upon that of Shakespeare's seventh age was occasionally ascribed even to Charlemagne. This reputation of the Emperor was current also among his enemies, as evidenced by Marsile's inquiries (v. 522–528). One is inclined to see even in this, the oldest and most heroic remnant of the royal cycle, the influence of the great vassals at work. It is no other than Ganelon, the brother-in-law of his sovereign, who addresses

him with the scornful and belittling language just quoted. In the later poems this tendency is carried much further. This is but the first note of the change, and jars upon the otherwise unbroken paean of praise to the defender of Christendom.

Allusion has been made to the divine protection accorded to Charles in the *Roland*. Similar cases of divine interposition by miracles or dreams are offered by later poems.[1] But with all this, the humanity of the king is emphasized to a gratifying extent. He appears primarily in the *Roland* in his proper place, that of the leader of the people. When the plan of vengeance for the death of the Peers has been once decided upon, Charles

> "Mult fierement tute sa gent reguardet,
> Puis si s'escriet à sa voiz grand e halte:
> 'Barun franceis, as chevals e as armes!'
> Li empereres tuz premerains s'adubet,
> Isnelement ad vestue sa brunie,
> Lacet sun helme, si ad ceinte Joiuse."
>
> *Id.*, 2984–89.

It is the Emperor in person who gives the orders, draws up the battle array and commands the first three divisions (v. 3015 f., v. 3035 f.). This glimpse of the king at the head of his troops is worth noting, for such scenes are rare. Rarely in the later poems is to be found this conception of the king as the active general-in-chief. More and more he is relegated to his palaces,—a victim of intrigue, and content to let the fighting be done by his vassals.

Returned to Aix, in what Gautier has well termed the last act in the tragedy, Charles appears in two more characteristic scenes. In the former, where the question of Ganelon's guilt is considered, Charles finds his authority

[1] Cf. *Anseïs de Carthage, Gui de Bourgogne, Chanson des Saisnes.* G. Paris treats the whole subject in *L'hist. poët. de Charlemagne.*

paralysed by the failure of his barons to return a verdict of guilt in the council. The unexpected verdict in favor of pardon having been returned, Charles was at a loss what to do:

> "Quant Carles veit que tuit li sunt faillid,
> Mult l'en enbrunchet e la chiere e li vis,
> Al doel qu'il ad si se claimet caitifs."
>
> *Id.*, 3815–17.

And it was only the personal attachment of Tierry which saved the Emperor's cause and honor.

We have seen the royal council discussing the king's policy on the field of battle (v. 168 f.), and again we have seen it render a decision on a question of purely feudal bearing (v. 3742 f.). Finally, at the close of the poem, a matter of religious import is handed over to an ecclesiastical council as being outside the royal jurisdiction. It concerns the baptism of the captive wife of Marsile. Even this detail Charles may not decide:

> "Si 'n apelat les evesques de France,
> Cels de Baviere e icels d'Alemaigne."
>
> *Id.*, 3976–77.

It is these bishops who authorize the baptism.

Other conventional traits of the king in the *Roland* are his riches and his power:

> "Le riche emperéur" (v. 2199).
>
> "Li reis poestéifs" (v. 2133).

It would be interesting to note how identically the same traits are assigned to Charles in the *Voyage de Charlemagne.* Just as the assumed date of this remarkable poem brings it into close proximity with the *Roland,* so the two poems represent the same grandiose portrait of the king. A few quotations, to be compared with those already made from the *Roland,* will show this clearly. At the very outset:

"Un jorn fut li reis Charles al saint Denis mostier,
S'out prise sa corone, en croiz seignat son chief,
Et at ceinte s'espee dont li ponz fut d'or mier.
Dus i out et demeines, barons et chevaliers."
Voyage de Charlemagne, 1–4.

For the treasure he takes with him:

"'Set cenz chameilz menrez d'or et d'argent trossez,
Por set anz en la terre ester et demorer.'"
Id., 73–74.

And for his escort:

"Or vait li emperere od ses granz compaignies.
Devant el premier chief furent oitante milie."
Id., 98–99.

Arrived at Jerusalem, the King is worthy to sit upon the throne in the *mostier* of sacred memory with his Peers in a scene that is highly impressive (v. 115–131).[1] King Hugo from afar knows of Charles' fame:

"'Bien at set anz et mielz
Qu'en ai oït parler estranges soldeiers
Que issi grant barnage nen ait nuls reis soz ciel.'"
Id., 310–312.

Later, when an angel arrives most opportunely to assure Charles of success in the accomplishment of the *gabs*, we must say with the poet:

"Deus i fist grant vertut por amor Charlemaigne."
Id., 791.

These few verses suffice to show the portrait of royalty as it is regarded in the eleventh century poetry. In the second

[1] An analogous idea was still current when a Spanish dramatist named Luis Velez de Guevara († 1644) wrote a play entitled *De la mesa redonda*. Of this Schack says: "Carlomagno personifica á Jesucristo; Flor de Lis á la Iglesia; Rolando á San Pedro; Durandarte á San Juan Evangelista; Montesinos á San Juan Bautista, y Garcelón á Judas;" Vid. *Literatura y arte dramático en España*, 5 vols., Madrid, 1886–88; vol. III, p. 307.

and third periods respectively, the influence of feudal hostility is more pronounced, and the spirit of the *romans d'aventure* contributes to relegate the king to a minor rôle by substituting the career of a chivalric knight. In the following chapters these later periods of the epic poetry bring some welcome innovations. The tendency of this literature, being, as already explained, just the opposite of the political tendency, the movement is toward individualism and away from national unity of action. The interest centres in the fortunes of a feudal family or of a single hero. It is no longer exclusively the nation against a foreign foe; and, when it is so, it is the fortune of the individual warrior in the national struggle that compels the attention. To the royal personage this tendency was fatal. A steady degeneration in the literary treatment of royalty is remarked. In the typical poems of the feudal, as compared with the royal epic, some hesitation will be felt in the rôle of the king as an individual,—a hesitation which doubtless reflects vacillation in popular estimation. Yet, the tradition of Charlemagne's majesty still asserts itself, and the king as a feudal conception always implies certain prerogatives and privileges.

Raoul de Cambrai, whose historical basis is evident,[1] throws interesting light on the bearing of the feudal lords before the king. The motive of the poem is the misguided award of a fief made by the *fort roi Loeys* to the prejudice of his own nephew Raoul. Such conventional epithets as *drois empereres* should not mislead us. The spirit of the poem is in open revolt against the policy of an unjust king. Raoul's uncle Guerri does not mince his words in addressing Louis:

> "'Et vos, fox rois, on vos en doit blasmer:
> Vos niés est l'enfes, nel deüssiés penser,
> Ne sa grant terre vers autrui delivrer.'"
>
> *Raoul de Cambrai*, 304–306.

[1] Cf. Paul Meyer in *Bulletin annuaire de la Société de l'histoire de France*, XXVII, pp. 82–106.

After Raoul's death, his mother Alix thus wards off the King who wishes to embrace her:

"'Fui de ci, rois, tu aies encombrier!
Tu ne deüses pas regne justicier.
Se je fuse hom, ains le sollelg couchier,
Te mosteroie a l'espée d'acier
Q'a tort iés rois, bien le pues afichier,
Qant celui laises a ta table mengier
Qi ton neveu fist les menbres trenchier.'"

Id., 5226–32.

The king is nominally head of the council of his vassals called after Raoul's death. *Loeys au vis fier* (v. 4820) *tint* i. *baston de pommier* (v. 4846) in this tumultuous gathering of passionate vassals. But no one is afraid of these conventional expressions of authority. Guerri sums it up when he says:

"'Drois empereres, ci a grant mesprison:
Se Dex m'aït, ne valez i. bouton.'"

Id., 4865–66.

And again:

"'Drois empereres, ne vos en qier mentir;
Trestos li mons vos en devroit haïr.'"

Id., 4879–80.

Guerri reaches the height of insolence a little later when he exclaims:

"'Cest coart roi doit on bien essillier,
Car ceste guere nos fist il commencier,
Et mon neveu ocire et detranchier.'"

Id., 5425–27.

In the Provençal poem of *Girart de Rossillon*, devoted to the adventures of that proud vassal whom Paulin Paris called "le seul adversaire digne du roi,"[1] we find the hero in constant and open revolt against the king,—here Charles Martel. In his strong city of Roussillon, with his four nephews, he mocks at the king's pretentions:

[1] *Hist. litt. de la France*, xxii, p. 305.

"'Li castels è bien fors el murs de caire
Neu ne le tien de lui nen sui bauzaire
Ne nen sa chevaler regun retraire
Catre nebous ai proz qui tuit sunt fraire
Li sordere len pout fulie faire
Seu vuel a monleum a son repaire.'"
Girart de Rossillon (Ox. MS.), 838–843.

Two verses at the outset show Charles Martel in a conventionally unattractive light:

"Soz toz omes est carles reis enviious
Hanc ne vistes negun tan orgeillous."
Id., 680–681.

The great cycle quoted usually under the title of *Les Loherains* presents the same state of affairs as *Raoul de Cambrai*. In their present form these poems give us a vivid picture of the turbulent feudal society.[1] There is a fierce untamed spirit in the heroes of this cycle which is well depicted in the vigorous verse. The king, here the weak Pepin, son of Charles Martel, is again represented as giving fiefs to those attached to him:

"Un riche don l'empereres li fist:
Tote Gascoigne li dona a tenir."
Li Romans de Garin le Loherain, i, p. 64.

Other passages show that the king controlled the marriage of his great vassals. But in all this he should follow the advice of his council. No king can afford to neglect this council, if he expects to preserve his land and honor. Bernart says to Pepin:

"'Vos estes jones et chevalier meschins,
Sé ciaus déchasses qui te doivent servir,
Tu en verras tes regnes apovrir;
Sor toi venront Paien et Sarrasin,

[1] Cf. G. Paris in *Romania*, xvi, p. 581.

Ne te porront Loherenc garentir
Que ne te fassent tes bons chatiaux croissir.' "[1]

Id., i, p. 281.

The opening of the last poem in this cycle, *La Mort Garin*, presents an interesting scene at the court of Pepin. At a grand assembly of the two opposing factions Pepin presides in person and announces that he will decide all disputes:[2]

" 'Je jugerai, ce dit li rois Pepins,
Par tel convent com vos porroiz oïr;
Que s'il i a escuier ne meschin,
Ne chevalier tant soit de riche lin,
Sé a mon dit met nesun contredit,
J'en combatrai orendroit, sanz respit,
Trestos armés sor un cheval de priz.' "

Mort Garin, p. 36.

Some quotations from another cycle will suffice for this period. In the opening verses of *Le Couronnement de Louis*, which belongs to the cycle of Guillaume d'Orange or Guillaume *au court nez*,[3] the *trouvère* thus recalls the past glories of France:

"Quant Deus eslist nonante et nuef reiames,
Tot le meillor torna en dolce France.
Li mieldre reis ot nom Charlemagne;
Cil aleva volentiers dolce France;
Deus ne fist terre qui envers lui n'apende;
Il i apent Baviere et Alemaigne,
Et Normandie, et Anjou, et Bretaigne,
Et Lombardie, et Navare, et Toscane."

Le Couronnement de Louis, v. 12–19.

This souvenir makes only more apparent the weakness of

[1] For the political situation described in *Les Loherains* cf. Charles Potvin, *L'Epopée des Ducs de Lorraine et de Brabant* in *Nos premiers siècles littéraires*, v. i.

[2] "Au point de vue de sa fonction sociale le roi Capétien remplit une double mission: il était juge et législateur." Luchaire, *Institutions monarchiques*, Préface.

[3] The introduction of Langlois' edition of the poem (Anc. Textes) presents an elaborate study of its historical basis.

Charles' successor Louis,—the personification of the tottering, vacillating king who throughout the poem needs the strong support of the faithful Guillaume. Louis calls upon him thus:

"'Hé! gentilz cuens, por Dieu l'esperitable,
Veez mon pere de cest siecle trespasse:
Vielz est et frailes, ne portera mais armes,
Et je sui jovenes et de petit eage;
Se n'ai secors, tot ira a damage.'"

Id., 256–260.

In *Le Charroi de Nimes* reference is made to the feeble condition of Louis upon Charles' death. Guillaume refers to this time, when Louis' rights to the throne were almost waived, in saying:

"'François le virent que ne valoies gaire:
Faire en voloient de toi ou moine ou abe,
Ou que tu fusses en aucun habitacle,
En un moustier ou en i. hermitage.'"

Le Charroi de Nimes (Meyer, *Rec. d'anciens textes*), 167–170.

This poem also shows Louis in his conventionally ungrateful attitude towards the faithful, determined Guillaume, who is the real hero of the *geste*. When other vassals have been rewarded, Guillaume, who has done the most in the campaigns in Italy, is sent empty-handed away:

"'Einsi vet d'ome qui sert a male gent:
Quant il plus fet, n'i gaaigne neant,
Einçois en vet tot adès enpirant.'"

Id., 302–304.

In *Aliscans*, of the same cycle, should be noted the appearance of this same Guillaume at the court of Louis, his brother-in-law. Furious that the King has sent no aid to his distressed vassals in the South, Guillaume strides into the audience chamber with no uncertain words:

"'Jhesu de gloire, li rois de paradis,
Save celi de qui je fu nasquis,
Et mon chier pere dont fui engenuis,
Et tos mes freres et mes autres amis,
Et il confonde cel mavais roi faillis,
Et ma serour, la putain, la mautris,
Par qui je fui si vieument recuellis
Et en sa cor gabés et escarnis.
Quant descendi sous l'olivier foillis,
Ainc de ses hommes n'i ot grant ne petis
Ki me tenist mon destrier arabis;
Mais, par les sains ke Diex a benéis,
Ne fust mes pere ki lés lui est assis,
Ja le fendisse del branc dusqe el pis.'"

Aliscans, 2637–51.

No wonder the King trembles at such a threat!

These quotations from the feudal epic, all dating from a period when the *trouvères* still felt a certain respect for tradition, reveal, as has been seen, a hesitancy of treatment. The individual king may be weak and despicable; he may be unjust and cowardly. But there is no open hostility against the *idea* of royalty. The king's literary rôle, though it has lost much of its original majesty, is still sufficiently prominent. The king, indeed, was an essential feature of feudalism, without which the social and political structure could not have existed. The cap-stone would have been lacking. No wonder the want of a strong, unified, respect-compelling figure in sympathy with his vassals, like Charlemagne, was often regretted. Nor is it any wonder that the memory of his just and all-victorious reign should long continue to be the feudal ideal. The fact that it was the feudal ideal accounts for the glory always ascribed to the rule of the great Emperor even when this glory is pushed far beyond the bounds set by history. This traditional halo about the name of Charlemagne shed something of sanctity even about his successors, and, we believe, saved the epic king for a time from the literary oblivion or disrepute into which a hostile feudal poetry tended to sink him.

The passages just quoted show that the complaint against the king in the feudal epic was based upon his injustice. This point will be made clearer when we come to consider the *traitors* as the givers of evil counsel at the court. To these *traitors* the king too often listened; and, as a result, he was charged with ungratefulness, favoritism, moral weakness, avarice, cowardice and injustice.

Our main point has already been made. An idea of the king's rôle in the national and feudal epic has already been gained. It is neither a brilliant nor a prominent rôle. But it is indispensable, and it is attended with certain heroic features of dignity and majesty. In the poems of the third period,—those ascribed to a date subsequent to the close of the twelfth century,—the sense of historical accuracy was steadily losing ground. The poems become diverting recitals, and, though they are most important for the general matter of this study, they bear little fruit for the study of the king's rôle. A few random quotations from these later poems will indicate the liberties taken with the once august figure of the king, and will show how he was occasionally travestied. With this will be found cropping up now and again the tradition of the heroic Emperor and his Peers.

In *Doon de Maience* we find a typical example of this mingled scorn and respect for the sovereign. When Charles first hears the audacious proposition of Doon to win Vauclere from the Saracens in order that Doon may marry the beautiful Flandrine, Charles trembles at the very thought:

> "Lors regarde entour li, de paour va tremblant;
> N'i voit home dez siens qui ja li port garant."
>
> *Doon de Maience*, p. 193.

But he recovers at once and defies Doon to compel him to take part in any such hare-brained expedition, while staking his life on the result of the single combat. Though the

excuse for this combat seems a paltry one, and though every effort is made to prevent it (p. 202) and to stop it (p. 218), yet, the result long remains in doubt. Doon may safely trust in God's protection:

> "Qui Dex aime de cuer ne se doit esmaier;
> Ja honni ne sera, pour qu'il voist droit sentier."
>
> *Id.*, p. 202.

Doon angrily expresses his intention of killing Charles (p. 211), but in his better mood, which doubtless represents the attitude of the poet and his audience, he hopes he may do the King no harm (p. 206), and twice later, when he fears he has mortally wounded Charles, he cries out to the Queen of Heaven:

> "'Glorieuse du chiel, roïne couronnée!
> Gardez moi mon seignor l'ame n'en soit alée.'"
>
> *Id.*, p. 210.

The barons too cry out in horror:

> "'Do, ne l'ochirre pas! mar l'oseras penser.'"
>
> *Id.*, p. 214.

But each combatant is so obstinate that God himself must stop the fight, not desiring the death of either hero. The poet states as a matter of fact:

> "Mez Dex gari le roy, qui tous jors l'avoit chier."
>
> *Id.*, p. 212.

The interfering angel bids Charles to accede to the reasonable request of Doon, threatening him with death, if he refuses:

> "'Et iras en enfer, en la meson puant
> Où déables t'atendent, qui t'iront tormentant.'"
>
> *Id.*, p. 221.

In *Fierabras*, while Oliver is fighting with the Saracen giant, Charles relapses into a most unworthy frame of mind.

The poet does not hesitate to put into his mouth sacrilegious words which would divert the audience:

"'Sainte Marie dame, dist Karles au fier vis,
Garisiés Olivier qu'il n'i soit mors ne prins;
Car, par l'arme mon pere, se il estoit ochis,
Ja en moustier de France ni en tout les païs
Ne seroit clers ne prestres à nul jour revestis;
Trestous feroie abatre auteus et crucefis.'
'Sire, ce dist dus Naimes, laisiés ester vos dis;
Li hons qui si parole sanble du sens mendis;
Mais priés pour le conte le roi de paradis,
Qu'il li soit en aïe par ses saintes merchis.'"

Fierabras, p. 28.

A harder thrust home than that given by Ogier to Charles in *Gui de Bourgogne* could hardly be imagined. The accusation of the *fainéant* kings is all there:

"'On dit que Karlemaines conquiert tous les reniez;
Non fait par Saint-Denis! vaillant iiii. deniers,
Ains les conquiert Rollans et li cuens Oliviers,
Et Naimes à la barbe, et je qui sui Ogiers.
Quant vos estes soef en vostre lit couchiez,
Et mangiez les gastiaus, les poons, les ploviers,
Lors menaciez Espaigne la terre à essillier;
Mais vos n'en ferrés ja en escu chevalier.
Damedieu me confonde, qui tout a à jugier,
Se g'estoie là fors, montés sor mon destrier,
Et fuisse de mes armes mult bien aparilliez
Se je ne vos prenoie par mon cors prisonier.'"

Gui de Bourgogne, 37–48.

Elsewhere it is Roland himself who says to the Emperor:

"'Ce n'est pas grant merveille se vous estes felon;
Cent ans i ad premier que cauchastes speron:
Puis que li hons vit trop, il n'a sens ne raison.'"

Jehan de Lanson (vid. *Hist. litt.*, xxii, p. 572).

In *Macaire*, when that arch-traitor seeks to seduce the queen in the garden, he uses that most artful of all methods to accomplish his foul purpose; he tells the queen that her husband, the king, is not good enough for her:

" 'Et ce est bien uns grans pechiés mortés
Quant un tés hom vos a à governer.' "

Macaire, p. 9.

None of the later poems better than *Gaydon* shows the type of perfect knight and vassal opposed to the king surrounded by his traitor council. This long poem is the recital of this long conflict with intercalations of an adventurous character. There is no rôle too ridiculous for the Emperor to play. Charles himself says it is two hundred years since he first put on his spurs and is angry at being baffled in his siege of Gaydon. He lowers himself to take a disguise and thus with Naimon seeks to gain admittance into Gaydon's strong place :[1]

" Charles li rois à la barbe chenue
Avoit sa robe maintenant desvestue ;
Une esclavinne, qui fu noire et velue,
Vest en son dos sans nulle arrestéue.
Son vis a taint de suie bien molue,
Prent i. chapel de grant roe tortue,
Et i. bordon dont la pointe iert aigue,
L'escharpe au col qui bien estoit couzue.
Fransois en rient, quant l'ont apercéue.
Naynmes s'adoube par autel connéue."

Gaydon, p. 294.

Disguised as a pilgrim, Charles finds difficulty in containing himself when one of the barons, referring to Charles himself, boasts in his presence :

" 'Par la foi que doi Dé,
Se gel tenoie en cest palais pavé,
Ja li auroie le sien grenon plumé,
Car nus plus fel ne fu de mere nés.
Tant a traïtres entor lui à plenté
Que loiaus hom n'i puet iestre escoutez.' "

Id., p. 298.

[1] For similar disguises adopted by Charles cf. *Doon de Maience*, p. 224, and the *Pseudo-Turpin*, cap. ix.

In spite of this disrespect, another late poem suggests the epic king:

"Karles dedanz son tref sist en i. chaiere
Tote de blanc yvoire, d'uevre subtile et chiere;
Delez lui se seoit dus Naymes de Baviere,
iiii. roi et x. contes vestu à lor baniere."
Chanson des Saisnes, i, p. 83.

Another note of confidence, though it seems rather a dying gasp of the epic king, is found in the *Roman d'Aquin* or *La Conqueste de la Bretaigne*, dating probably from the end of the twelfth century. The king has been wounded in fighting the Saracens (*i. e.*, Normans),[1] and his condition fills his followers with dismay. But with his old-time confidence Charles reassures them:

"'Ne saiez esmayé,
Ge gariray et vendré en santé.'"
Aquin, 2816.

The only post-mortem mention we have found of Charles personally is in *Les Narbonnais*. The tradition here represents him majestic in his solitary grandeur:

"A Es l'an portent anterrer hautement:
En la chaere l'ont assis an seant,
O encore est; bien le sevent alquant
C'ont esté en la terre."
Les Narbonnais, 5327–30.

Such are the general aspects under which the epic poetry of the eleventh to the thirteenth century treats the figure of royalty. By whatever name he might be called, the epic king shows unmistakable traces of the beneficent influence of the long cherished respect for Charlemagne. But the illustrations have shown how the tendencies of contemporary feudalism undermined the grandiose position of the king in

[1] Cf. G. Paris, *Romania*, ix, p. 455; *Aquin* (ed. Anc. Textes), Introd., p. xxxix.

the earliest poems. Of his final insignificance it has been difficult to present testimony, for the simple reason that the king is merely named as an existing personage and then left in the background. The predominance of other types in our later chapters will tacitly explain the literary oblivion which overtook the king.

In reality the *trouvères* expended but little effort upon the monarch. There is in all literature something hopelessly uninteresting about a king *as* king. Perhaps we feel the impossibility of his measuring up to the requirements of his exalted place. Perhaps his royalty detracts from his humanity. The poets of all time have chosen their heroes among the warriors or from the middle classes of society. It has been truly said: "Les grands hommes perdent plus qu'ils ne gagnent à passer par le prisme de l'épopée, et Charlemagne, comme l'a fort bien montré M. Léon Gautier, est incontestablement plus grand dans l'histoire que dans tous les poèmes de la *geste de France.*"[1] So as time went on, first the feudal vassal rose into prominence; then, the chivalrous hero in search of adventure and of the love of a woman; and, finally, the *bourgeoisie* of the thirteenth century cities announces itself with no uncertain sound. In the succeeding chapters we shall for the first time find strength and vitality of character-drawing, high ideals in domestic as well as in national life,—in fine, that living incarnation of the nation in the individual which makes of the French epic a chapter in the history of French civilization.[2]

[1] Kurth, *Hist. poét. des Mérovingiens*, pp. 316, 317.

[2] For an excellent summary of the treatment of the king in the late poems cf. G. Paris, *Hist. poét. de Charlemagne*, p. 357.

The Hero.

Having disposed of the impersonal and somewhat uninteresting type of monarch as described in the *chansons de geste*, we come now to consider those heroes upon whom the whole skill of the *trouvères* was expended. A glimpse has already been caught of the Twelve Peers[1] struggling at Ronceval in defence of the Emperor and of the ideas of Christian chivalry for which he stood.[2] They were originally few in number, these heroes devoted to the person of the Emperor with an unquestioning personal attachment, and with an unwavering execution of duty, whatever might be the sacrifice. They were singularly simple characters, capable of being summed up in a single epic epithet,—the incarnation of such plain but noble qualities as appealed to the unsophisticated audience which delighted in the *Roland*. A single phrase sufficed to recall the moral aspect conventionally ascribed to each individual hero.

It would seem that in the earlier part of our period the conception of the *trouvères* divided all vassals into two categories: first, those who were faithful to the king and to the Christian cause; these were their heroes; and second, those who were traitors to this same cause, and who correspond to the villains in a play. Upon the latter the vials of their wrath are generously discharged.

Such a simple system of dividing the good from the bad is surely indicative of a very limited amount of artistic ability. The time very soon came when the reality in feudal relations belied such a summary fashion of treating those in opposition to the king. The great vassals of illustrious

[1] Cf. Ferdinand Lot, *Quelques mots sur l'origine des pairs de France* in *Revue historique*, jan.-avril, 1894.

[2] Cf. Kurth, *Hist. poét. des Mérovingiens*, pp. 462, 463.

lineage who were opposing the progress of the royal power naturally objected to figuring in the *chansons de geste* as traitors. Self-aggrandizement and armed opposition to the king were perfectly compatible with the highest heroism and the noblest qualities of character. Such is the simple explanation of the noble but disloyal characters we meet in *Raoul de Cambrai, Ogier de Danemarche, Gaydon, Girart de Rossillon, Quatre Fils Aymon,* &c. Thus, instead of treating under this head the faithful vassal only, we must use the broader word: the *hero.*

From an artistic point of view the progress herein indicated is considerable. Charles himself, Turpin, Roland and Oliver indeed stand out grandly and majestically with their simple devotion. But they are not human. They are the impersonation of an ideal; and, like any exaggerated type, they finally become tiresome. The change that came in the twelfth century poems is, then, to be welcomed. The *trouvère* sought to make his hero, whether faithful or rebel, more human. To accomplish this implied the substitution of the individual for the nation. The heroes of the poems of this second period are painted from life. There is a satisfying quality of humanity about Raoul de Cambrai, Garin and Begon, Guillaume *au court nez* and Girart de Rossillon which is lacking in the older heroes.

It has been frequently remarked that the heroes in the *Roland* are rather personifications of ideals dear to the spirit of the time than men of changing mind and mood like ourselves. As a natural man and from a psychological point of view, Ganelon is the only satisfying figure in the *Roland,* and he must be reserved for the next chapter. Roland, Oliver, Turpin and Naimon are men who can be counted upon. Once given their moral shade of character, it will not change. The late poems unvaryingly refer to them as the highest types of certain moral qualities. It has become

a commonplace for us also, since Gautier first made the *Roland* known in an appreciative edition,[1] to speak of Roland as the personification of youthful unreflecting ardor, of Oliver his companion as no less brave but more wise, of Naimon the old giver of good counsel as always ready to speak a word for justice and fairness, and of Turpin as the Christian warrior, not disdaining to join the temporal arm with the power of the Spirit in the fight for his Lord and his Emperor. These are the four characters who, with Ganelon and the Emperor, occupy the foreground in the poem and upon whom the action turns. Anyone familiar with the poem feels that they alone are responsible for its high tone, its lofty ideals of patriotism, of faithful service, of personal honor untarnished, and of an unbroken faith in that bliss of a future existence to which nothing is to be preferred. High indeed are these ideals; eloquent and inspiring are the pages which two modern critics have written on such a text.[2]

What then, judging from these types in the earliest *chansons de geste*, are the essential traits of a hero to an eleventh century audience? Upon what qualities did such an audience insist before a character could be altogether admirable?

i. Trust in God.
ii. Loyalty, in a broad sense.
iii. Bravery and jealousy of honor.

What is important to notice and what is clear in the poems themselves is that these three qualities of the hero remain constant throughout the period of popularity of the *chansons de geste*. Other qualities are only grafted upon these. In

[1] First edition, Tours, 1872.

[2] Cf. Léon Gautier *passim;* and G. Paris, *La poésie du moyen âge:* première série, pp. 87–118.

the feudal epic, to be sure, loyalty to the king as an individual gives way before loyalty to family, to friends, or to some ideal of justice and equity. But the essential idea of loyalty to some cause is constant in the hero, just as one of the traits of the traitor is his fickleness, his underhand dealings, his frequent change of front. This being so, it will not be necessary to consider the poems by periods as was done in the preceding chapter. All that need be noticed is the filling in of the detail, the rounding out of the character in the twelfth and thirteenth century poems. The base features remain the same, but the result is more real, more human.

This trust in God as the Giver of every good and perfect gift is a very real thing in the minds of these heroes, and is one of the first lessons taught to a young man by his parents or sponsors. When that good and gentle man Guillaume d'Orange came to give his nephew Vivien the *accolade*, he charged him with these words:

> "'Va t'en biaus nies diex qui fist moisant
> Te donst proesce honor et hardement
> De foi garder ton seignor lealment
> Et de confondre celle gent mescreant'
> 'Amen biaus honcles' l'anfes vait respondant."
> *Les Enfances Vivien* (MS. 1448), 5173–77.

These farewell pieces of advice given to the youthful heroes as they were about to embark on their adventurous careers are usually long affairs,—too long to permit quotation here.

Intermixed, especially in the later poems, with the inculcation of religious duty, we find a series of practical injunctions, — *chastiements* or *enseignements* as they were called,—some of which are remarkably modern in tone.[1] They reveal a very different conception of duty, they con-

[1] For an exhaustive collection of *chastiements* in the French epic poems cf. Eugen Altner, *Ueber die Chastiements in den altfranzösischen chansons de geste*, Leipzig, 1885.

tain elaborate formulae of conduct for circumstances in which we cannot imagine one of the older heroes with his simplified code. This innovation and refinement of conduct seems to be directly traceable to the softening of feudal manners and to that complication of daily life which was contemporary with the invasion of Provençal etiquette combined with the literary conventions of the Breton poems. The following passage, where Elie sends his son Aiol to the king, is a perfect manual of behavior:

"'Or en irés, biaus fieus, al congiet Dé:
Jhesus vos i laist faire par sa bonté
Dont li rois mieus vous aint et son barné.
As eskiés ne as tables, fieus, ne jués:
Celui tient on a sot qui plus en set,
Car se li uns les aime, l'autre les het,
Lors commenche grant guerre sans nul catel.
N'aiés cure d'autrui feme enamer,
Car chou est un pechiés que Dex moult het,
Et se ele vos aime, laissiele ester.
Si vos gardés molt bien de l'enivrer,
Et sachiés bien qu' ivreche est grant vieutés.
Se vous veés preudome, si le servés,
Se vous seés en bant, si vous levés;
Les grans et les petis tous honorés;
Gardés que nul povre home vos ne gabés;
Ançois i poriés perdre que conquester.'
'Ce ferai jou, biaus pere,' che dist li ber."

Aiol, 162–179.

Most interesting is the scene in *Les Narbonnais* where Aymeri dismisses his sons in search of adventure and a living. He urges them to be gone quickly, lest he suspect they delay for some evil purpose:

"'Volez i fere oltraje ne folie
Ne les puceles prandre par esboutie
Ne les borjoises honir par vilanie?'"

Les Narbonnais, 283–285.

As for the youngest, upon his head the father puts all the responsibility of guarding Narbonne:

" ' Dormir porré en ma sale hautaingne
Entre les braz Hermanjart ma compaingne ;
N'avrai poor que Sarrazins m'i praigne
Filz, por vostre barnage !' "

Id., 236–239.

When their father is dead it is their mother who gives parting counsel to the two *dolant orfelin*, Huon de Bordeaux and his brother Gerart :

" ' Enfant, dist ele, vous alés cortoier :
Je vous requier, pour Diu le droiturier,
Que n'aiés cure de malvais losengier ;
As plus preudommes vous alés acointier.
A sainte glise pensés du repairier,
Portés honnor et amor au clergié.
Donnés du vostre as povres volentiers ;
Soiiés courtois et larges vivendiers,
Si serés plus amés et tenus chiers.' "

Huon de Bordeaux, p. 18.

In the same strain are the following : *Doon de Maience*, pp. 74, 75 ; *Gaufrey*, pp. 8, 9 ; *Chanson des Saisnes*, p. 86. The standard of social etiquette in some of these latter poems closely reflects that in vogue among the Provençal poets who speak much of measure, generosity, courtesy and frankness.

Needless to say, his trust in God goes everywhere with the hero. With God all things are possible, and the warrior in a critical juncture does well to call upom Him. God, however, has his own favorites whom he aids without waiting to be addressed. This divine aid is available for any end. Just preceding the passage already quoted from *Aiol*, his mother regrets to see her son start out so slimly equipped financially. But Aiol is of good cheer and laughingly cries out :

" ' Se vos n'avés avoir, Dieus a assés,
Qui del sien me donra a grant plenté.' "

Aiol, 159, 160.

When Aymeri de Narbonne offers to stay behind and guard Narbonne for Charlemagne, the Emperor bids him remember that he is poor and will need much money. He replies:

" 'N'est encor Dex la sus el firmament,
Qui est puisanz toz jorz sanz finement?
Je croi en lui molt bien veraiement
Qu'il m'aidera, ce cuit, prochienement.' "
Aymeri de Narbonne, 762–765.

When Gaydon is about to engage in single battle with the traitor Thiebaut, Riol comforts Gaydon by assuring him:

" 'Je sai de voir que voz Thiebaut vaintrez,
Car Dex et drois sera vostre avoez.' "
Gaydon, p. 28.

This, of course, is the theory of the judicial trial by arms.[1] It is the true note of Christian confidence expressed by Guibert, when he is restored to his baptized Saracen bride Agaiete and when in reply to her anxious questions about the future, he replies:

" 'Dame, c'est au Déu de lassus.' "
Prise de Cordres, 2529.

More mystic is the faith of the thoroughly religious Naimon who, when hard pressed by the Saracens, assures his men:

" 'En paradis Damme Dé nous atant,
Je ouay les anges qui cy nous vont gueraint
De nous touz vont les armes attendant.' "
Aquin, 1573–75.

Also the ecstatic words of Vivien:

" 'En Paradis Damedex nos atant.
Ge oi les angles par desoz nos chantant.
Dex! por quoi vif, que ge ne sui morant,
En cele joie que je désirre tant
Fust la moie ame avec les innocenz!' "
Li Covenans Vivien, 1560–64.

[1] Cf. *Gaydon*, pp. 42, 43; *Doon de Maience*, p. 79.

One is tempted to see in such expressions as these and others,[1] especially of the Crusade cycle, the influence of the Mahometan belief in the reward of those who fell in battle.

Instances could be multiplied to show this belief in the constant participation of the divine with the human. That the religion of the Middle Age was closely bound up with every activity of life is evident in every monument, artistic and literary, that we have of the period. Hence, it is not surprising to find in the epic that the heroes were uniformly men of God, valiant defenders of Christianity as an ideal, above all mighty men of prayer. These prayers constitute to the last one of the features of the epic poems.[2] Often of great length, in the form of an address to God, to Christ, to the Virgin, and in the later poems to the saints as well, they sum up the *trouvère's* off-hand recollection of incidents gathered from the Old and New Testaments. When a prayer is to be made, time is no object. The battle stands still, the enemy holds off until the hero shall have finished his orisons. One of these prayers resembles another so much that that of Oliver made in the midst of his combat with Fierabras may serve as a type:

> " 'Glorieus Sire peres, qui formastes Adam
> Et Evain sa moullier, dont li pules sunt grant,
> Tout lor abandonastes par le vostre commant,
> Fors le fruit d'un pumier dont ne fuissent goustant;
> Eve l'en fist mengier par le dit du serpent,
> Paradis en perdirent trestout de maintenant,
> Labourer les convint, dont moult furent dolent;
> Puis furent li dyable en après si poissant,
> Qui n'estoit saint ne sainte, tant fuissent bienfaisant,
> Ne convenist aler en ynfer le puant.

[1] Cf. *Roland*, 1134–35; *Doon de Maience*, p. 316; *Chanson d'Antioche*, v. i, pp. 113, 162; *Cov. Vivien*, 778–780; *Chancun de Willame*, 344–346.

[2] Cf. *Bauduin de Sebourc*, v, 134–163. The whole subject has been treated by Johann Alton, *Gebete und Anrufungen in den altfranzösischen chansons de geste*, Marburg, 1883.

Pités vous en prinst, Sire, quant souffert eustes tant ;
Par saint Gabriel l'angle fu fais l'anoncement
Que en la sainte Virge prenderiés naissement.
Trestoute créature en fu reléechant,
Grant joie en demenerent bestes, oisiel volant.
Li troi roi d'autres teres vous alerent querant,
Tout lié vous aourerent quant vous vinrent devant ;
Vo destre main tendistes, à vous furent offrant,
Et par estraignes teres furent puis repairant
Pour le felon Herode qui les aloit cercant ;
Puis decola pour vous maint innochent enfant,
Desquels les ames sunt en joie permanant.
Puis alastes par tere vos amis préechant,
Le bien leur demonstrates et alas pourcachant.
En la crois vous pendirent li felon mescréant.
Quant Longis vous feri de la lance trenchant,
Il n'avoit ainc véu en trestout son vivant ;
Li sans li vinst par l'anste juques as ex coulant,
Il en terst à ses ex, tantost en fu véant.
Merchi vous cria, Sire, sa poitrine batant,
Et vous li pardonnastes sans point de mautalent.
El sepucre fus mis après nonne sonnant,
Au tierc jour en après éus suscitement ;
En infer en alastes, si en jetas Adan
Et tes autres amis qu'en furent desirant.
A saintismes apostres fustes apparissant,
Commandas que ton nom alaissent préechant ;
Puis montastes ou chiel, trestout lor ex véant.
Si voirement, biax Sire, com jou i sui créant,
Et c'est voirs que j'ai dit, si me soiés aidant,
Ke je cest paien faice de bataille taisant,
Et ke il croie en vous, ains qu'il soit recréant.' ''

Fierabras, pp. 29, 30.

No wonder Fierabras

" Olivier apela, si li dist en riant :
' Biaus amis Oliviers, ne me va pas celant,
Quele orison est ce que as devisé tant ?
Volentiers l'ai oïe, par mon diu Tervagant.' ''

Id., p. 30.

Next in importance as an essential feature of the hero's character is his loyalty to his king or to those toward whom

he is in some peculiar relation of mutual faith. Of this loyalty there is no lack of examples. The *Roland* is impregnated with this grand spirit of unflinching loyalty. Just before the battle Roland says to Oliver:

> " 'Bien devuns ci ester pur nostre rei;
> Pur sun seignur deit hum sufrir destreiz,
> E endurer e granz chalz e granz freiz,
> Si'n deit hum perdre e del cuir e del peil.' "
>
> *Roland*, 1009–12.

Again:

> " 'Pur sun seignur deit hum susfrir granz mals,
> E endurer e forz freiz e granz chalz,
> Si'n deit hum perdre del sanc e de la char.' "
>
> *Id.*, 1117–19.

Turpin says:

> " 'Seignur barun, Carles nus laissat ci,
> Pur nostre rei devum nus bien murir;
> Chrestientet aidiez à sustenir!' "
>
> *Id.*, 1127–29.

The reward of this loyalty is certain:

> " 'Amis Rollanz, Deus metet t'anme en flurs
> En paréis entre les glorius!' "
>
> *Id.*, 2898–99.
>
> " Morz est Turpins li guerreiers Charlun.
> Par granz batailles e par mult bels sermuns
> Cuntre paiens fut tuz tens campiuns.
> Deus li otreit sainte benéiçun!"
>
> *Id.*, 2242–45.

When Garin tries to dissuade Oliver from risking himself in battle for the king's cause, Oliver replies:

> " 'Qui son droit signeur faut, il n'a droit de parler.
> Puisque je voi Franchois fuïr et trestourner,
> Se je ensi le fac, où se puet mes fier?
> Au besoing puet on bien son ami esprouver.' "
>
> *Fierabras*, pp. 7, 8.

This last verse constantly recurs throughout our poems as the expression of loyalty between friends. The oath taken

by young Vivien upon two occasions brings out the combination of personal bravery and zeal for the good cause:

"La jura l'enfes oant tot le barne
Que jà mais ne fuiroit por Turc ne por Escler
Demie lanche ne ii. pies mesure."
Les Enfances Vivien (MS. de Boulogne), 2206–08.

And again:

"'Oncle Guillaume, dist Viviens li frans,
Par tel covent me ceigniez hui le brant,
Que ne fuirai jamès en mon vivant
Por Sarrazin, por Turc né por Persant
Plain pié de terre selonc mon escient:
Tant le met-ge vers Deu en covenant,
Le glorieus, le pere roiament.'"
Li Covenans Vivien, 40–45.

Nor are those of humble birth, as will be seen in another chapter, always behindhand in their expressions of loyalty (cf. *Doon de Maience*, p. 276). But by none is the idea so beautifully expressed as by Guillaume d'Orange:

"'Mal soit de l'arbre quel vergier est plantes
Ki son seignor ne donne ombre en este.'"
Les Enfances Vivien (MS. de Boulogne), 335–336.

But there were other objects of loyalty besides the overlord. The sentiment of family or personal honor, as well as that of friendship, equalled, if it did not triumph over, this sentiment of feudal loyalty. Roland and Oliver have become types of friends, bound together by this *compagnonnage* or *fraternité d'armes* of which Flach has made such an interesting study.[1] In the *Chanson d'Antioche* of the Crusade cycle we read:

"Par dedens Antioche furent doi chevalier
Qu'estoient compaignon, moult tint l'uns l'autre chier."
Chanson d'Antioche, v. ii, pp. 187, 188.

[1] *Le compagnonnage dans les chansons de geste* in *Etudes romanes dédiées à Gaston Paris* (Paris, 1891). Reviewed in *Romania*, xxii, 145.

This *compagnonnage* usually dates from early youth and seems to be based chiefly upon a mutual liking between two young chevaliers. Such are Beuve d'Antone and Gui d'Aspremont in *Daurel et Beton* and Ami and Amile in the poem of that name. In *Aye d'Avignon* Garnier, son of Doon de Maience, quarrels with his *compagnon* Berengier, son of Ganelon, *por une pucele.* Based upon a generous recognition of good qualities in an enemy is the friendship, though not technical *compagnonnage* of Ogier and Karahuel the Saracen in the *Enfances Ogier.* In the *Mort Garin* we find this idea of mutual aid among allied vassals:

> " 'Cuidiez-vos ore que je soie si pris,
> Sé a moi viénent li mien charnel ami,
> Que je lor viée, ne mon pain, ne mon vin,
> Ne mes chastiax, ne mes viles ausi?' "
>
> *Mort Garin*, p. 80.

No sacrifice, however, was ever so great as that made by Amile for his friend Ami. Amile discovers that by the blood of his two little sons alone can his friend Ami be healed. It is the fearful sacrifice of a father's love and pride to a friend's duty supported by the promise of God,—a motive that would have pleased Corneille. Note the last two verses especially of Amile's consent:

> " 'Mais que santé voz poïsse donner,
> Tost le feroie, ge'l voz di sans fausser;
> Car au besoing puet li hom esprouver
> Qui est amis ne qui le weult amer.' "
>
> *Amis et Amiles*, 2854–57.

The poet hastens to justify the sacrifice:

> "Mais tout ce fu par l'amonestement
> Jhesu le pere qui touz les biens consent."
>
> *Id.*, 3161–62.

The editor Hofmann is quite right in saying of this legend which has had such popularity through the ages: "Der

moralische Sinn der Sage ist, dass Freundestreue bis zur Aufopferung des eignen Lebens Gott wohlgefällig sei."[1] Speaking of a similar sacrifice in *Daurel et Beton* (1062–64) M. Paul Meyer writes: "L'idée du serviteur poussant jusqu'à ses plus extrêmes limites le dévouement à son seigneur est un des lieux communs de la littérature féodale et se présente sous des formes variées."[2]

No less vital than the importance of his duty to others is the responsibility of the hero to preserve his own fair name untarnished. The *Roland* is full of this solicitude for reputation:[3]

"'Or guart chascuns que granz colps i empleit,
Male cançun ja chantée n'en seit.
Paien unt tort e chrestien unt dreit.
Malvaise essample n'en serat ja de mei.'"
Roland, 1013–16.

"Respunt Rollanz: 'Jo fereie que fols,
En dulce France en perdreie mun los.'"
Id., 1053–54.

"Respunt Rollanz: 'Ne placet damne Deu
Que mi parent pur mei seient blasmet,
Ne France dulce ja chieet en viltet!"
Id., 1062–64.

"'Mielz voeill murir que me vienget viltance.'"
Id., 1091.

"'Se jo i moerc, dire poet ki l'avrat,
Que ele fut à nobilie vassal.'"
Id., 1122–23.

"'Male chançun n'en deit estre cantée.'"
Id., 1466.

"'Pur Deu vus pri que ne seiez fuiant,
Que nuls pruzdum malvaisement n'en chant!'"
Id., 1473–74.

[1] Vid. Hofmann's Introduction to his edition of the poem, p. viii.

[2] Vid. *Daurel et Beton*, Préface, p. xxiv.

[3] Cf. F. Settegast, *Der Ehrbegriff im altfranzösischen Rolandsliede* in *Ztsch. für rom. Phil.*, ix, p. 204 f.

" 'Mielz voeill murir que hunte jo'n retraie.' "
Id., 1701.

Numerous parallels are offered by later poems. The sentiment of honor forbids Guillaume to give ear to a dishonorable proposition made to him by the king:

" 'Que ja diroient cil baron chevalier:
Vey la G., le marchis au vis fier,
Comme il a ore son droit seignor boisié!' "
Charroi de Nimes (Meyer Rec.), 406–408.

In *Garin et Begon* it is Isori who rising from bed to fight says:

" 'Ains mangeroie mon auferrant de pris
Que de ma bouche nuns mauvais plais issit.' "
Romans de Garin le Loherain, v. i, p. 279.

In the same spirit:

" 'Signeur, ce dist Ogiers, france gent honnerée,
Gardés male canchons n'en soit de nous cantée,
K'il n'i ait couardie faite ne pourparlée.' "
Fierabras, p. 162.

More forcible still are the words of a proud vassal who, when summoned to surrender, casts back this defiance from the walls:

" 'Por néant l'avez dit;
Se je tenoie l'ung pié en paradis
Et l'autre avoie au chastel de Naisil,
Je retrairoie celui de paradis
Et le mettroie arrier dedans Naisil.' "
Romans de Garin le Loherain, v. i, p. 232.

Vivien's words on the battlefield of Aliscans show there is more glory for a young man than for him who is old in dying on the field. He strikes the same note as Roland at that other great defeat at Ronceval:

" 'Ore est einsi alé:
Tenu nos fust toz jorz mès a vilté,
A nos parenz fust toz jorz reprové.

Mielz nos vient-il einsi avoir erré
Que nos fuison à tel honte eschapé ;
Se nos morons en cest champ hennoré
S'aurons vers Deu conquise d'amisté.
Quant li homs muert en son premier aé,
Et en sa force et en sa poesté,
Adont est-il et plaint et regreté ;
Mais quand il muert dedenz son viel aé,
Jà ne sera né plaint né regreté.' ''

Li Covenans Vivien, 680–691.

To the same effect are the words of Aymeri as he comforts his wife for the supposed loss of their son in battle :

'' 'Nostre linage l'a en eür ainsi,
Q'an cemetire n'en a nul enfoï.
Mes en bataille et en estor forni,
Qui la morra, par Dieu qui ne menti,
Vilain reproche ne sera dit de lui
Au grant jor do joïsse.' '' [1]

Les Narbonnais, 4390–95.

[1]To a note may be relegated the mention of another primitive Teutonic trait of the hero's character,—that of vaunting his own prowess in public or before an adversary with whom he is about to engage. Every poem presents examples of this obligation incumbent upon the hero to do a certain amount of blustering and boasting before undertaking a task. Sometimes it takes the form of indulging in innocent *gabs*, as did the French in King Hugo's palace (vid. *Voyage de Charlemagne*) ; more often it is a confident assertion that one's adversary is doomed to a deservedly speedy annihilation (vid. *Aymeri de Narbonne*, 1108–1119). This was particularly a fault of young knights, and we are glad to come upon a passage in which the voice of authority reproves this habit, so opposed to our ideas of becoming modesty. Charles says to his young knights disputing one another's prowess :

'' 'Mès de vostre aventure vos volez trop prisier,
Vostre chevalerie fait trop à resoignier,
Trop an volez parler le soir contre foier.
L'an ne doit sa proece mentevoir ne prisier ;
Assez est qi dira : 'Vez là bon chevalier.' ''

Chanson des Saisnes, v. i, p. 225.

Too suggestive to pass unnoted in this connection are the words with which Aymeri's men present themselves to the king of Pavia :

Very closely allied to this pride in the maintenance of an irreproachable honor is that feverish love of vengeance which characterized the feudal ages. There is an element of gentleness and courteous consideration in much of the religious and chivalric literature which is a very plain evidence of how much the Church did to moderate the passions and refine the manners of the Middle Age. But these feudal heroes were of different stuff. Their religion did not include a very broad interpretation of brotherly love. It was usually a question of honor that was at the root of all these feudal and religious wars. To maintain his own honor was as incumbent upon the mediæval fighting man as to defend the honor of his God. The preservation of each made for the same qualities of character. Just as in the *Roland* the Twelve Peers, representing Charles' vassals, were all present to a man to defend the honor of the Christian Emperor against the Infidel, so in the feudal epic are the *vavassours* at the disposal of their overlord's interests. The claims of land and of honor are the loudest claims upon those involved in the complicated chain of the feudal system.

In the *Roland*, when the loss of the rear-guard is known, vengeance is the cry of the herald angel in person:

> "'Charles, chevalche! car tei ne falt clartet.
> La flur de France as perdut, ço set Deus;
> Vangier te poez de la gent criminel.'"
>
> *Roland*, 2454–56.

> "'Si m'eist Dex, li rois de paradis,
> No somes tuit duc et conte et marchis
> N'i a celui qui n'ait riche pais.
> Ca nous envoie le preuz cuens Aymeris
> Li mieudre princes qui el monde soit vis.'"
>
> *Aymeri de Narbonne*, 2340–44.

Six centuries later M. Edmond Rostand struck the same Gascon note in the lines wherein Cyrano de Bergerac presents to De Guiche the *cadets de Gascogne*.

And Turpin makes Roland in his *Passion* cry out: "Quotiens per te aut Iudaeum perfidum aut Sarracenum peremi, totiens Christi sanguinem, ut puto, vindicavi."[1] The avenging of the death of the Peers at Ronceval was destined to be a long story. So great was this insult to Christendom that throughout our period the *trouvères* represent their heroes as engaged in the congenial task of making the pagans drink to the dregs the cup of repentance.

This wreaking of vengeance, whether it be upon Saracen or feudal rival, fills the pages of the *chansons de geste* with scenes of cruelty and bloodshed. The best example is offered by *Raoul de Cambrai*, which to mention is sufficient; for an inextinguishable hatred and an unsatisfied thirst for blood runs through the whole of this impressive poem. The poets themselves seem to have felt the monotony of this motive, judging from an exclamation at the close of the *Mort Garin:*

> "Grans est la guerre qui onques ne prist fin;
> Sainte-Marie! mervoille est a oïr,
> Qu'apres les peres la reprenent li fil."
>
> *Mort Garin*, p. 146.

It is quite evident that it is the unhappy Ganelon turning over in his mind some means of retaliation upon Roland, and upon Roland only, that brings on the whole catastrophe at Ronceval.

Presumably this passion for vengeance met with a severe rebuke at the hands of the Church, pledged as it was theoretically to submission, to forgiveness and to charity. When the sons of Aymon are incensed against Yon for his treatment of them, Renaut alone, remembering Yon's past kindness to them, preaches the doctrine of returning good for evil:

[1] *Pseudo-Turpin*, cap. xxii.

"'Contre sa felonie li doi rendre bonté.
Si le dist l'escristure et li bon clerc letré,
Que ensi le doit faire qui a le cuer sené.'"
Renaus de Montauban, p. 228.

Such, again, seems to be the lesson in the reproof administered to Guy, Count of Maience and father of Doon. Guy is promising himself the pleasure of putting an end to the machinations of the traitor Herchembaut. He is consumed by this idea of revenge; so much so

"Que i. angre du chiel contreval devala;
Devant le conte vint, ainc mot ne li sonna,
Mez de la grant clarté le bon quens aveugla,
Et li angre du pié si grant coup li donna
Que trestout estendu à terre le porta. . . .
Qui goute ne véoit, ne jamès ne fera
Se Dex n'i fet vertu, qui le poveir en a."
Doon de Maience, p. 58.

The *procédé* is likely borrowed from the blindness of Saul of Tarsus on the way to Damascus. This strife among vassals brought all the horrors of intestine war in its train. To close with what is at once a sad picture and a piece of vivid description, read this passage from one of the older poems. The country has been ravaged by forty thousand Germans engaged in the feudal wars of the *Lorrains* against the king:

"Tex siz jornées alast uns pelerins,
Qu'il n'i trovast, ne pain, ne char, ne vin;
Encontre terre gisent li crucefi;
Sor les autex puet on l'erbe coillir;
Ne gentis homs n'i plaide a son vesin.
La o estoient li champ et li maisnil,
Les beles viles, et li borc seignori,
Croissent li bois, ronces et aubespin,
Et li boschaje grant, et fier et antif.
Nus homs n'i ose aler par le païz,
Qu'il ne soit mors, o desrobis, o pris."
Romans de Garin le Loherain, v. ii, p. 139.

We can judge from the passages quoted the emphasis laid upon the three features of our heroes' character as they have been mentioned. If any differentiation were attempted between the heroes of the earlier and those of the later poems, it would consist in this: the heroes of the later poems are less passionate, less fiery, less implacable; they feel the softening influence of woman and of many of those principles of Christian charity which the later Middle Age included in the terms *chevalerie* and *courtoisie*. After 1150 the feudal code of ethics weakens before the chivalric code, though most poems offer a combination of the two. The great body of the thirteenth century epic poems present the chivalric ideal grafted upon the old feudal heroes who still preserve many of their primitive ear-marks. But it is to be noted that the hero of even the latest *chansons de geste* is not quite the same man as the hero of a contemporary romance of adventure. There remains in him an unmistakable trace of his genealogical connection with the paladins of Charlemagne. In spite of his love adventures, and the lorn maidens, and the kind fairies, his mind harks back to his old-time foe, the Saracens, and to his duty toward God. If we are not mistaken, this undercurrent of sturdy faith, this seriousness of purpose, was just the quality which was sought by a portion of the public as a contrast to the more imaginative, fantastic and *vain* heroes of the Breton cycle. Had it not been for the traditional reverence unconsciously felt for this primitive Christianized Teutonic hero, the Gawains and the Lancelots would perhaps have sooner driven out the more serious Guillaumes and Ogiers.

Bearing in mind, then, that the poet sometimes takes familiar liberties with a character for whom he feels a certain traditional reverence, we shall find the result to be less clear-cut as a type, but more tangible, more human, more appealing to our sense of reality.

Some scattered references to a poem, probably of the twelfth century, will bring this out in a variety of ways. When Oliver *incognito* goes out to fight Fierabras, the giant Saracen asks him what sort of a man the far-famed Roland is. Oliver unrecognized compares his *compagnon* thus with himself:

" 'Rollans est i. peu menres de li en son estant,
Mais trop par a le cors hardi et combatant.
Onques Dius ne fist homme, tant soit de haute gent
Se Rollant s'i combat, ne faice recréant;
Oliviers ne vaut mie encontre lui i. gant.' "

Fierabras, pp. 17, 18.

Oliver himself still maintains as of old:

" 'Miex vaut mesure à dire que ne fait sorparler.' "

Id., p. 18.

Roland's rashness is again brought out when the Peers, taken prisoners, are sent to parley with the Saracen *amirant*. Naimon is in despair:

" 'A Diex, ce dist dus Namles, qui en crois fus penés,
Rollans nous fera tous ocirre et afoler;
Quel Cm diable l'ont o nous amené?' "

Id., p. 77.

This same Naimon, the traditional adviser of the king, this mediæval Nestor, this uncompromising advocate of Right against Might, is the most unchanging figure among the heroes. He is the embodiment of good sense, moderation and justice. In the present poem there is a touch given him which is as amusing as it is rare. When the *amirant* boasts:

" 'Mauhomet me maudie, qui j'ai mon cief voé,
Se je jamais menguë tant comme vis serés.'
'Se Diex plaist, dist dus Namles, assés jéunerés.' "

Id., p. 79.

When later at the dinner Floripas, the beautiful daughter of

the *amirant,* appears, Naimon becomes quite gallant and renews his youth to such an extent as to surprise the young knights:

"Et respondi Rollans: 'Onques mais n'oï tel;
Trop par avés ce poil et kanu et mellé;
Quel L. dyable vous font d'amours parler?'
'Sire, ce dist dus Namles, je fui ja bacelers.'"

Id., p. 84.

We should be passing over one of the most attractive sides of the heroes' character if, after showing them in their conventional aspects, we should fail to note their attitude toward women. Early mediæval literature affords us very little material for a study of the sentimental relations of man and woman. The literature of the clerks had little to say of woman that was good. When the great change of attitude came over Christian Europe, when woman was raised upon an ideal literary pinnacle which she was far from actually occupying in society, and when woman-service became a vogue in chivalric society,—then it was natural that her part in love-making should be the major part. A discussion of this subject will be taken up in the chapter devoted to woman. We may simply note here what we should expect to find,—that the growing prominence of woman as a compelling agent and as an object to be won, during our period profoundly affects the aims and purposes of the hero. Woman is no longer merely a lesser incident in the career of a hero, hardly worthy of notice. Under the influence of Provençal and Breton literary forces working together, she emerges into the foreground, and especially in the later poems is to be carefully considered.

Where there are no women, however, there can be no love-making, and in the early poems the women very rarely appear. The Puritan Aude must be mentioned later in her proper place. The betrothal of Berneçon in the second part of *Raoul de Cambrai* brings out some interesting features,

but manifestly of a later period than the first part of the poem. The *Lorrains* cycle offers in general only the Germanic type of woman. Thus, one comes naturally in these few remarks, as in the chapter devoted to woman, to a later period when the influence of the Breton cycle has already made itself felt. The whole period from the eleventh to the fourteenth century presents an unsettled opinion of woman's value and of her place in society. Occasional exceptions to the contrary, and in spite of her conventional position as mistress of man's affections and dictator of his service, one has difficulty in admitting her moral and social equality with man in the literature preceding the Italian Renaissance. What is said here is from the point of view of the heroes.

When Guillaume d'Orange hears of the beauty of Orable, the Saracen princess of Orange, he describes thus the well-known effects of his reflections:

> " 'Ne puis dormir par nuit né someillier,
> Né si ne puis né boivre né mengier,
> Né porter armes né monter sor destrier,
> N'aler à messe, né entrer en moustier.' "
>
> *Prise d' Orange*, 372–375.

And a little later, when Guillaume finds her in her palace:

> " 'Diex! dist Guillaumes, Paradis est céanz!' "

No scene in that masterpiece of the talented Adenet is more beautiful than the finding of the unhappy Berte by the King Pepin. The King is here down on the level of an ordinary mortal, indeed is *incognito*. The King, upon learning of the innocence of Berte and after putting away Aliste, uses every means to discover if his real wife be alive in obscurity. He confesses:

> " 'S'aucune chose en ai, par la Virge honnorée,
> De li ou de la robe que ele en ot portée,
> Sachiez, je l'ameroie assez plus que riens née,
> Et si la baiseroie et soir et matinée.' "
>
> *Berte aus grans piés*, 2468–71.

Shortly after this the King comes upon Berte praying at a chapel in the wood, as is her wont. Without recognizing her after three years of separation, Pepin is struck by her beauty:

"De son cheval à terre tout maintenant descent,
Et Berte remest coie, qui nul mal n'i entent,
Et li rois assez tost entre ses bras la prent.
Et quant Berte voit ce, moult ot grant marement.
Damedieu reclama, qui maint ou firmament."

Id., 2670–74.

The King, furiously in love, now declares:

"'O moi venrez en France, la terre noble et gente,
Ja n'i veriez jouel, tant soit de chiere vente,
Que je ne vous achatte se il vous atalente,
Et si vous asserai ou pays bele rente,
N'aura home en la terre qui de riens vous tormente.'"

Id., 2680–84.

The reply of Berte is charmingly naïve:

"'Frans hom, fait ele au roy, pour Dieu, laissiez m'ester,
Trop me faites ici longuement demorer,
Car mes oncles Symons doit assez tost disner,
Pour ce k'apres mengier s'en doit au Mans aler
As gens le roi de France, por vitaille porter."

Id., 2690–94.

It would be hard to find in modern poetry a courting-scene where the artist's hand is more delicately shown than this scene by the thirteenth century poet just quoted. But there were other conceptions of the subject. In *Fierabras*, when the Christian knights are at the mercy of the Saracen Floripas, it is she who controls the situation and dictates the terms. She is determined to have Guy for her lover and swears by Mahomet:

"'Se vous ne me prenés,
Je vous ferai tous pendre et au vent encruer.'"

Fierabras, p. 85.

This argument is evidently unanswerable and Floripas has her

way. More women of her type will be met later. Then, there is scorn for the seduction of youthful beauty, and praise for the good homely housewife and companion of years. An amusing passage in *Gaydon* offers this view artistically contrasted with the chivalric love of Gaydon and Claresme. When one of Claresme's handmaidens seeks to seduce old Gautier, he breaks out in a wholesome rage with *tel parole qui ne fu mie bele:*

> " 'Dame, dist, il, par saint Pol de Tudelle,
> A moult petit m'est de vostre favelle.
> Alez voz ent aval celle praelle,
> Enmi cel pré, à une fontainnelle,
> Desoz cel aubre dont la foille ventelle ;
> Clere en est l'eve, et clerc la gravelle.
> S'avez trop chaut, si i alez, pucelle.
> De vostre amor ne m'est une escuielle,
> Car moillier ai et plus cointe et plus bele ;
> Quant il m'en membre, trop li cuers me sautelle.' "
>
> *Gaydon*, pp. 269, 270.

And thus he regrets his absence from his own faithful spouse :

> " 'Ahi ! Lorance, dame bien conéue,
> Gentil moillier, toz jorz vos ai éue ;
> Se me perdez, ce est chose séue,
> Tote joie est de vostre cors issue.
> Vos soliez venir à la charrue
> Aporter moi la grant crote cornue,
> En la toaille la grant tarte fessue.
> Quant vos véoie, s'iert ma joie créue,
> Puis vos tenoie au vespre tote nue ;
> La vostre paie n'estoit pas à créue.
> J'ai por mon sire fait grant desconvenue,
> Quant j'ai laissié ma terre et ma charrue,
> Et ma moillier por coi li cuers m'arguë ;
> Por soie amor la guere ai maintenue.' "
>
> *Id.*, p. 274.

Then, there are countless examples in the later poems of the sort of amorous encounters related in the *romans*

d'aventure. In these the knights fall easy victims to the charms of some maiden in distress and serve her under the most impossible circumstances. An instance of this treatment is furnished by Doon's meeting with the youthful Nicolette who, we are told, has reached but the inexperienced age of eleven years and one month! This does not prevent Doon, who is but fifteen, from falling the easiest of victims to *amours qui tout vainc.* The following verses, describing the youthful lovers at table, deserve to be quoted:[1]

> "Au mengier sunt assis, qui longuement dura,
> De beisier savereus i. entremes i a,
> Que à chascun morsel li i. l'autre donna.
> Du mestier sunt nouvel, mès Dex les enseigna
> Et destreiche d'amours, qui si souspris les a."
>
> *Doon de Maience*, p. 117.

Such are some of the aspects in which the heroes appear before the feminine element in the epic poems. Beginning with the undemonstrative love relegated to the background in the earliest *chansons de geste*, we soon get to the period where love plays a leading rôle. A more detailed examination would only further prove how profoundly the chivalric conception modified the original epic treatment of the relation of the sexes in literature. Yet, in the epic the hero is first and last a fighting-man; only as a diversion or by chance is he interested in woman. His dearest companions throughout are his horse and his sword; only from time to time do we hear of his wife, his mother or his sweetheart. The essential point to retain from the foregoing exposition is this: woman appears with increasing frequency as our period advances, and the hero's treatment of her reflects the influence of chivalric ideals.

One object, though necessarily a minor object, of this

[1] With this passage cf. the love of Garin de Montglane. Vid. *Analyse de Garin de Montglane* in Gautier, *Epopées*, iv, pp. 126–171.

study is to show the French *trouvères* at their best as literary artists, as creators of characters. Enough has already been said to indicate in general the chief features of the epic hero's character. But some poets got beyond the stage of following a type and created an individual, something more than a wooden man to put through a series of bloody conflicts or a succession of romantic adventures in which events alone were emphasized. To this class belong Aiol, Vivien, Roland, Oliver (in *Fierabras*), Girart de Rossillon, Begon in the *Lorrains* cycle, Berneçon in *Raoul de Cambrai*, Gaydon and Guillaume. It is with reason that Gautier has devoted the whole of his fourth volume to the remarkable *geste* of which Guillaume is the central figure. With its many *branches* it penetrates the whole body of the epic poetry from the primitive style to the *romans d'aventure*. Throughout Guillaume preserves certain characteristics which make of him not only a hero, but what is more interesting,—a man. After some acquaintance with these figures of the Past, perhaps a preference for Guillaume may be permitted and supported. A few passages from *Aliscans* will serve to show Guillaume at his best.[1] We have already seen him in the *Prise d'Orange* wooing the Saracen Orable who was destined to become his wife under the new name of Guibourc. *Aliscans* lands us squarely *in medias res*. The battle is on, and Guillaume finds his horse Baucent is weakening. Now, all depends upon the horse when the odds are so great, and the hero addresses these words of cheer and comfort to his weary mount:

> "'Cheval, dist il, moult par estes lassez;
> Se vous fussiez iiii. jorz sejornez,
> Ja me refusse as Sarrasins mellez,
> Si m'en vengasse, quar à tort sui navrez;

[1] The newly discovered *Chancun de Willame* represents Guillaume in an equally attractive light.

Mès or voi bien qu'aidier ne me poez.
Si m'aïst Dex, n'en dois estre blasmez,
Quar tote jor moult bien servi m'avez.
Petit fu ore ne fussiez galopez
Et coréuz, poinz et esperonez :
De ton service te rent merciz et grez.
S'estre péusses à Orenge menez,
N'i montast sele devant xx. jorz passez,
N'i mengissiez d'orge ne fust purez,
ii. fois ou iii. o le bacin colez,
Et li fourages fust jentil fein de prez
Tot esléuz et en seson fenez ;
Ne béussiez s'en vessel non dorez ;
Le jor fussiez iiii. fois conréez
Et de chier poile trestoz envelopez.
Se en Espaigne es des paiens menez,
Si m'aïst Dex, moult en serai irez.' ''

Aliscans, pp. 16, 17.

It is no wonder after this that Baucent arches his neck, whinnies, paws the earth and starts off refreshed. Another scene on the battlefield : this time his nephew Vivien is dying and asks for confession and absolution. No priest is at hand ; but with what solemn dignity Guillaume replaces the man of God :

"A s'amosniere mist Guillaumes sa main,
Si en traist fors de son benoït pain
Ki fu sainés sor l'autel Saint Germain.
. . . . . .
'En lieu de Dieu serai ton capelain,
A cest bautesme vuel estre ton parin,
Plus vos serai ke oncles ne germain.' ''

Id., p. 26.

The whole scene, which treats of Guillaume's return to Orange and of Guibourc's refusal to receive the defeated warrior who claims to be her husband, has been fully appreciated by Gautier.[1] When it is decided that Guillaume shall go to King Louis to demand his aid, the poet intro-

[1] *Epopées*, iv, p. 496 f.

duces this charming scene between this childless couple (*Aliscans*, pp. 60, 61):

"Od le Guillames, Guiborc va enbraçant.
Par grant amor se vont entre acolant,
Li uns por l'autre va de dolor plorant."

His wife begins to try Guillaume:

"'Or t'en iras en France l'alosée,
Or me lairas dolante et esgarée
Entre tel gent dont ne sui pas amée,
Et tu iras en la terre asasée.
Mainte pucele i venras coulorée
Et mainte dame par noblece acesmée;
Je sai très bien tost m'auras obliée,
Tost i sera vostre amors atornée.'"

Guillaume embraces and comforts his wife, promises temperance in everything, and most important:

"'Ne ja ma bouce n'ert à autre adesée,
S'iert de la vostre basie et savorée
En cest palais dont la cors est pavée.'"

We have already seen with what high words Guillaume dared address the king and queen at Paris. But he did not forget the host and his wife who alone had received him kindly. Generosity was one of his traits, as it is everywhere of the ideal hero. At the close of the poem, when the warriors take final leave of Guillaume and Guibourc at Orange, the affection of all the host for this lovable couple takes the form of a general regret:

"Congié demandent à Guillame au cort nés;
Li quens leur done, ses a molt acolés
Dame Guibors les a baisiés assés.
Aval par l'ost ont leur grailles sonés;
Lors s'apresterent, s'ont leur harnas trossés.
Defors Orenge fu grans li deus menés;
Mains chevaliers s'i pasme."

Id., p. 252.

The *Lorrains* cycle offers two death scenes which may fittingly bring the study of the epic heroes to a close. The first to die is Begon who falls, treacherously shot by a traitor, while hunting with his dogs:

> "Hulent et braient et mainent grant tempier,
> Toutes ses plaies li corurent lichier;
> Diex ne fist home qui n'en préist pitié . . . .
> Gentis homs fu, moult l'amoient si chien."
> *Romans Garin le Loherain*, v. ii, p. 244.

The other to die is his brother Garin who also meets a violent death in a church at the hands of the opposite party. Even in death he towered above his foes:

> "Autresi gist Garins entr'ax ocis
> Com fait li chasnes entre les bois petis."
> *Mort Garin*, p. 219.

The preceding pages, though not exhaustive, have presented the hero of the French epic in various lights: as warrior, as vassal, as husband, as father, as son, as chevalier. The qualities of Christian faith, loyalty and courage everywhere distinguish the hero,—qualities of a warrior sternly trained in a society dominated by the feudal ideal. Upon these three virtues as a basis there was built by the *trouvère* a superstructure of character which became more varied as time went on. The later poems relate the life-story of an individual hero whose personal doings invest the narrative with interest. This latter-day hero is no longer simply a personified virtue: he is a man with psychological processes of his own, for whose divers triumphs and failures we feel a human sympathy. The literary development of the hero from Roland to Aiol, Hugues Capet and Bauduin de Sebourc registers the contemporary evolution in the ideals of mediæval society.

The Traitor.

Of all the characters presented in the *chansons de geste* there is none whose origin is so obscure and whose persistence is so remarkable as that of the traitor. The epic king, as has been seen, is an historic personage with epic traits; the heroes are the embodiment of the feudal virtues; the rise of woman and of the bourgeoisie in the twelfth century poems is in accord with the social evolution of the time; the presence of the Saracens as the conventional enemies of Christendom is accounted for by tradition and by the contemporary influence of the crusades. But how account for this Ganelon? Does he spring fully armed with his wiles from the head of the unknown author of the *Roland*, or is he the mere personification in literature of a type already current in popular tradition?

Few attempts have been made hitherto to at once account for the appearance of the traitor in popular tradition and to explain the rare favor with which the epic poetry maintained him. Although the question of origins does not primarily concern this study, where we are considering the written literature only, yet a suggestion may not be out of place.

To begin with, the word *traître* in old French has two meanings: one, a restricted meaning applied to a person who, like Ganelon or Judas Iscariot, has betrayed his over-lord or master; the second is a derived and extended meaning applied to anyone who fails to observe the feudal code of ethics. In the latter sense *traître* is the equivalent of *felon*, *gloz*, *pute gent*, *mauvais recréant*, or any of the general abusive epithets bestowed by the *trouvères*. Innumerable instances could be cited from mediæval Romance literature, in which no definite act of *lèse-majesté* is ascribed to the traitor. Here at the outset, in considering the possible

origin of the traitor as a familiar spirit in French popular tradition, it is only the traitor in a restricted sense that we mean.

No one has gone farther than Osterhage in seeking in nature-worship the origin of certain phenomena of the Northern *sagas*.[1] The same method is employed in his study of the Ganelon *mythos*. We may borrow from Osterhage's theory what he seems to have satisfactorily proved and reject its vagaries. Take this sentence: "Auch aus dem Rolandsliede lässt sich also der Kern eines Mythos, der den Stiefsohn verfolgende und tötende Stiefvater, herausschälen, und ich gelange auch hier zu dem Resultat dass der Verräther ein den Lichtgott tötender Dämon der Finsterniss und des Winters ist."[2] The first part of this statement seems well founded: there is evidently something back of Ganelon, something profoundly intimate and real which had maintained itself in the popular mind because it touched closely the reality of life. This something real is furnished by the enmity which in all time has existed between stepparents and children as the result of second marriages. That this suspicion of animosity, of which individuals in this relationship are sensible, should have developed into an epic motive is plausible. But when Osterhage, following in the footsteps of Grimm, begins to talk about the *Lichtgott tötender Dämon*, we are not only on dangerous ground, but very far from Ganelon in whom we have the first recorded traitor. We cannot follow Osterhage with his hypothesis into the realms of Germanic mythology. But limiting our confidence to his remarks upon the strife bred between parents and children as the result of second marriages, there

[1] Vid. Osterhage's further series of articles entitled *Anklänge an die germanische Mythologie in der altfranzösischen Karlssage* in *Ztsch. für rom. Phil.*, xi, 1–21; xi, 185–211; xi, 327–344; xii, 365–380.

[2] Vid. *Ztsch. für rom. Phil.*, x, 260.

are passages in the *Roland,* in *Amis et Amiles, Daurel et Beton, Doon de Maience, Aye d'Avignon, Gui de Nanteuil, Les Enfances Ogier* and *Bauduin de Sebourc* which lend a strong color of likelihood to his theory.

Quite as primitive as the step-father idea is another, much easier to grasp,—that of attributing a defeat to the machinations of a traitor. This idea is so familiar both in history and in literature that it need not be developed here. As Lamartine has said, speaking of the people: "Ce qu'il retient, ce sont surtout les grandes chutes et les belles morts."[1] But the people is also inclined to account for defeat and the death of its heroes: the traitor is created to bear the blame.

But there were two other special reasons why the traitor as a type should have been brought into special prominence in the popular poetry that concerns us. First, the prominence of Judas as the betrayer of Christ naturally suggested the seeking of a corresponding figure in the *entourage* of Charlemague, himself so often represented in the rôle of Christ.[2] In the legend there were twelve Peers just as there were twelve Disciples. Who should be the Judas but he who already had evil in his heart and cherished bitter hatred against his own kith and kin? Granted that there was well founded belief in the enmity existing between step-parents and children, upon whom could the rôle of Judas in this mediaeval Passion be more reasonably grafted than upon Ganelon? The scope for the activity of such a traitor within the family was limited. The dominating figure of Charlemagne attracted him. There is nothing new in this thought: even Uhland was struck by the parallelism which here exists and notes the twelve Peers as armed

[1] Lamartine, *Graziella.*

[2] For Ganelon in the rôle of Judas cf. *Pseudo-Turpin,* cap. xi; *Chronique rimée de Philippe Mouskes,* 6773–74.

Apostles and Ganelon as the Judas among them.[1] At the close of this chapter will be found a few extracts showing how widely Judas and Ganelon were recognized as partners in the crime of treachery. When one recollects the influence of the Church upon the popular poetry, and the rôle assigned to Charlemagne as the result of this influence, no further proof is needed to show that the position of Ganelon as arch-traitor was assured.

So much explains the rôle of Ganelon not only in the *Roland* but in the whole cycle of poems which have their point of departure in the defeat at Ronceval. But there is a final and immediate reason for the continued popularity of the traitors. It has been seen that there is another and broader signification universally given to the word *traître*. This concerns us especially in the later poems, when the field for digression offered by the defeat at Ronceval had become too circumscribed. The strife of the great vassals and the Crown had as a result in the epic poems a division of the characters into families or *gestes*. On the one hand, there were those who were faithful to the king and who naturally desired his welfare; and on the other hand, there were those who were in reality hostile to him and poured into his willing ear the most treacherous of counsels. Now, it frequently happened that these wicked, self-seeking vassals were very near to the royal person and profited by the royal favor to gain their own ends. This naturally aroused the indignation of the loyal vassals against these evil counsellors and against the king who was foolish enough to heed them.[2] The type of king, then, was bound to lose in dignity, as we have seen, just in proportion as the rôle of the traitor

[1] Vid. Uhland, *Schriften*, iv, p. 331.

[2] These court counsellors under the Capetians were called *palatini*, *curiales*, *familiares*, *consiliarii*, and replaced the *comitat* of the Merovingian kings. Cf. Luchaire, *Institutions monarchiques*, i, p. 197.

developed. There is a whole series of poems, including *Ogier le Danois, Girart de Rossillon, Les Quatre Fils Aymon* and *Gaydon,* in which feudal heroes who would naturally be the sturdiest defenders of the Crown are forced to take arms against it as a result of the traitors' machinations. To sum it up, the actual presence in feudal times of a class of men among the king's counsellors who for selfish ends were hostile to the best interests of the nation, as represented by the king and his true well-wishers, is the real explanation of the hold which this idea of a traitor in an extended sense took upon the feudal mind. There we must seek, in history again as in every case, the explanation of the traitors' rôle in the French epic.

One more phase in the development, this time literary, of the traitor, and we shall have done. The *trouvères,* rarely gifted with originality of treatment, and finding themselves confronted with the presence of the traitor, naturally kept him in an important rôle. Even as early as the *Roland* one may see what an elaborate, what an artistic and absorbing treatment was expended upon Ganelon. The literary possibilities of the traitor were early evident. But as the poems turned more and more into lighter vein and the element of fiction asserted itself, the figure of the traitor as villain became more appreciable. From this point of view someone has spoken of the traitor as "ce personnage sacrifié, dont tout poète a besoin pour faire valoir davantage par le contraste son héros de prédilection."[1] This is certainly the light in which most of the later poets regard the traitor. He is not always mean and despicable. On the contrary, he is often noble and heroic like Milton's fallen angels, and in his fate the poet awakens our keenest interest. As it

[1] Siméon Luce, *Le génie français dans la Chanson de Roland* in *Revue contemporaine,* 28 février, 1867.

often transpires in a play, so in many a poem it is the villain and not the hero who has the leading part.

They are, then, in every sense worthy of attention, not only for their own traits but for the artistic service they render in bringing out the other personages. There is an element of fate about their sad lot. For when the mania for genealogies set in, the traitor *geste* was set apart by itself. Then not only was every independent traitor connected by the poet with this family or *geste*, but every member of this family was *ipso facto* a traitor born. The odious seal was set even upon generations yet unborn. Gautier has gathered in a note three passages from *Girard de Viane*, *Doon de Maience* and *Jourdains de Blaivies* which indicate how completely this division of the epic personages into three *gestes* was felt and practised.[1]

The traitor, then, in the broad sense of the word had his place in a great number of poems,—in fully one-half of the poems in the bibliography which accompanies this study.

The first, the best and the most interesting of the whole race is unquestionably Ganelon. Not only to our way of thinking, but to the mediæval poets as well, his figure dominates all his successors. To him, then, we must devote a special study; for in so doing we shall come upon one of the best character sketches in the epic poetry. Let us follow step by step the poet's development of Ganelon's character.

Ganelon, who is the brother-in-law of Charles (v. 294), first appears in the *Roland* (v. 217) with sound advice in favor of accepting Marsile's peace overtures. Even Naimon, the conventional exponent of wisdom and the unwearied destroyer of traitorous counsels, unreservedly advocates Ganelon's advice (v. 230–242). It is Roland (v. 277) who frankly recommends his step-father for the important mission

[1] *Epopées*, i, p. 409, note.

to the Saracens, and the confidence of Charles and of the other counsellors in him is complete:

"Dient Franceis: 'Car il le poet bien faire;
Se lui laissiez, n'i trametrez plus saive.'"
Roland, 278–279.

Ganelon is clearly the best man for the commission. But his outburst of indignation against Roland can be explained only by the supposition that bad blood was already known to exist between them. Ganelon then, naturally suspicious, thinks Roland is seeking his death instead of his honor by naming him for this dangerous mission. The following verses lead a strong probability to Osterhage's theory already considered:

"Dist à Rollant: 'Tut fols, pur quei t'esrages?
Ço set hum bien que jo suis tis parastres;
Si as jugiet qu'à Marsiliun alge.
Se Deus ço dunet que jo de là repaire,
Jo t'en muvrai un si tres grant cuntraire,
Qui durerat à trestut tun edage.'"[1]
Id., 307–312.

The supposition of preëxistent enmity may be inferred from verse 308.[2] But this is all that the poet has borrowed from tradition in the drawing of his character. The whole conception of the poem indicates a new and original treatment of a familiar matter:

"Guenes i vint, qui la traïsun fist.
Dès or cumencet li cunseilz que mal prist."
Id., 178–179.

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[1] Pseudo-Turpin and Philippe Mousket offer the same treatment of this episode. The latter contains the significant explanation:

"Mais, moult à loi d'ome parastre,
Maneçoit Rollant, son fillastre."
Chronique rimée, 6542–43.

[2] Graevell in *Die Charakteristik der Personen im Rolandsliede*, p. 122, accounts for Ganelon's hatred of Roland by pointing out that Roland is his step-son and that Ganelon is envious of the young knight.

These verses indicate that Ganelon was already known as the traitor of Ronceval. Other songs had doubtless related his treachery. But the form that we know of the *Roland* seems to owe nothing to earlier treatments. The portrait of Ganelon is original and complete in itself.

Whatever may have been the complexion of the primitive Ganelon, he appears first in the *Roland* as a hero, one of the best and most trusted servitors of the Emperor, tainted only by a family quarrel with his step-son, the *preux* Roland. From the time that he makes up his mind to fulfil the commission, he is turning over some dire means of retaliation upon Roland. This is the psychological interest of Ganelon: to watch how his heart is corroded by this desire for vengeance. The intimacy of Blancandrin and Ganelon as they ride along on their way is a most subtle appreciation of the suggestive influence of one man upon another. Ganelon in a communicative frame of mind, brim full of dire projects, cannot disguise his personal animosity for Roland, upon whom the conversation turns. The upshot of their intimacy is:

> "Tant chevalchierent Guenes e Blancandrins
> Que l'uns à l'altre la sue feit plevit,
> Que il querreient que Rollanz fust ocis."
>
> *Id.*, 402–404.

Blancandrin is not slow to apprize his king of what a handy tool they have in Ganelon. What a picture of the moral downfall of a man is presented in these simple words:

> "Guenelun prist par la main destre as deiz,
> Enz el vergier l'en meinet jusqu'al rei.
> La purparolent la traïsun seinz dreit." [1]
>
> *Id.*, 509–511.

Ganelon renders full justice to the prowess of Roland

[1] *Pseudo-Turpin* makes of Ganelon a mere barterer, a second Judas. Vid. cap. xxi.

(v. 557) and scouts the idea that the Saracens could harm the united strength of the Christian army commanded by Charles in person. It is only by a ruse that the death of Roland can be compassed, and that ruse Ganelon's influence with Charles is strong enough to insure. Note especially that this is all that Ganelon contemplates. He does not see, as Marsile does, the far-reaching consequences of his treason. He does not admit even at his trial that he has transgressed the bounds of legitimate revenge in causing Roland's death. That is all which occupies him now:

> "'Bels sire Guenes, ço dist li reis Marsilies,
> Cunfaitement purrai Rollant ocire?'
> Guenes respunt: 'Ço vus sai jo bien dire.'"
>
> *Id.*, 580–582.

The psychological interest is vastly increased by this limited purpose of the traitor. The treasonable pact is solemnly made between Marsile and Ganelon, who has now sold himself body and soul like Judas Iscariot (v. 603–660).

To follow the narrative in its later details is unnecessary. The critical moment in the evolution of Ganelon's character has been indicated. Charles does not like his advice to leave Roland in charge of the rear-guard:

> "Si li ad dit: 'Vus estes vifs diables;
> El cors vus est entrée mortel rage.'"
>
> *Id.*, 746–747.

But nevertheless he follows the advice. Later, when the treason has become evident, Ganelon is arrested and kept in confinement until Charles reaches Aix. It is the moment of the trial which again interests us. Ganelon, charged with the betrayal, affirms in perfect good faith:

> "Dist Guenelun: 'Fel seie, se jo l' ceil!
> Rollanz me forfist en or e en aveir,
> Pur que jo quis sa mort e sun destreit;
> Mais traïsun nule n'en i otrei.'"
>
> *Id.*, 3757–60.

The sympathy of the poet and of his audience has not yet entirely deserted Ganelon:

> "Devant le rei là s'estut Guenelun;
> Cors ad gaillard, el vis gente colur;
> S'il fust leials, bien resemblast barun."
>
> *Id.*, 3762–64.

Again, in the presence of all he stoutly maintains that he has only taken vengeance upon Roland:

> "'Vengiez m'en sui, mais n'i ad traïsun.'"
>
> *Id.*, 3778.

We know how it ended: the proven traitor was torn asunder by four horses, and this or an equally ignominious death by hanging became the conventional reward of the traitor. Not only is Ganelon torn asunder, but his thirty hostages are hung. And this is just:

> "Qui traïst hume, sei ocit e altrui."
>
> *Id.*, 3959.
>
> "Qui traïst altre, nen est dreiz qu'il s'en vant."
>
> *Id.*, 3974.

Such is the Ganelon of the *Roland*: at the outset a brave warrior and a sage counsellor; but when corroded by hatred, flattery and bribes he is capable of treachery. He maintains his dignified bearing to the last, and is by all odds the most living figure in this poem.

If his rôle was not already fixed, the *Roland* indicated the treatment to the poets who came after. The later poets simply contented themselves with the remark that their traitor was *of the race of Ganelon.* The natural thing to do, as Gautier has shown,[1] was to provide ancestors for Ganelon. It is curious to notice that the later poets were evidently in the same predicament as ourselves about Ganelon's ancestors. Was he the first traitor of the family, or did he inherit his

[1] *Epopées*, i, pp. 399–415.

tendencies? A few quotations will best indicate this hesitancy. The author of *Gaufrey* sets the seeds of treachery back one generation in the character of Ganelon's father Grifon de Hautefeuille.[1] It is with him, genealogically speaking, that the earmarks of the traitor are first visible. Of the twelve sons of Doon de Maience this Grifon alone was the black sheep. This at once suggests that the number of the twelve Disciples has again here counted for something, and also that the traitor *geste* might be properly called the *geste* of Grifon de Hautefeuille:

> "En France ot i. linage, cui Damedex maldon!
> Ce fu Griffon d'Autefueille et son fil Guenelon,
> Beranger, et Hardré, et Hervi de Lion,
> Antiaumes li felon, Fouques de Morillon."
>
> *Les Quatre Fils Aymon*, p. 46.

In *Gaufrey* this Grifon is of a jealous and plotting disposition throughout, and thus sums up his programme:

> "'Que ja n'amerai homme qui fache loiautés,
> Mez tous jours traïson et fine faussetés,
> Icheus seront tous jours mi dru et mi privés.'"

The poet adds:

> "De chen a il dit voir, le traïtre prouvés;
> Que de li issi puis Guenelon et Hardrés,
> Milon et Auboin, et Herpin et Gondrez,
> Pinabel de Sorenche et Tiebaut et Fourrés,
> Et Hervieu du Lion, qui sot du mal assés,
> Et Tiebaut d'Aspremont, qui fu moult redoutés.
> De li issi tel geste dont Kalles fu irés
> Et tous les xii. pers ochis et decoupés,
> Que Guenelon vendi, oï l'avés assés."
>
> *Gaufrey*, p. 121.

The closing lines of the poem leave no doubt of the author's intention to give Grifon the place of honor as head of the traitor family.

[1] Cf. Kr. Nyrop, *Storia dell' epopea francese*, p. 159; *Les Quatre Fils Aymon*, p. 46.

In *Fierabras* again, where the action in Italy is supposed to precede the defeat at Ronceval, Ganelon is represented as already tainted and all his *parent* (pp. 10, 136). Ganelon is *faus provés*, but he will not yet, even at the bidding of his more unprincipled family, raise his hand against the person of the Emperor:

> " 'Ne plaice Dieu, dist Guenes, le pere onipotent,
> Que ja vers mon signeur faice traïtrement;
> Trop serai recréans se je sa mort consent.
> De lui tenons nos teres et nos grans casement,
> Si li devons aidier et bien et loiaument;
> N'i a celui ne soit à lui par serement.' . . .
> 'Mils aim avoir le teste et les menbres caupés
> Que mon pooir ne face, ja n'en serai blamés.' "
>
> *Fierabras*, p. 151.

Gui de Bourgogne, likewise pretending to antedate the events narrated in the *Roland*, represents Charles as vacillating between the treacherous counsels of Ganelon and Hardri on one side, and of Naimon on the other. In general it may be said that the poets who have represented Ganelon or any of his pseudo-ancestors as taking part in events previous to the tragedy at Ronceval have all taken for granted Ganelon's rôle in the *Roland*. Ganelon seems to have long been given the benefit of extenuating circumstances, and to have been regarded as the best of a bad family. The *cycle du roi* in general retains some of the good points in his character, and thus differs from the latest poems, like *Macaire*, wherein the traitor is altogether despicable. One amusingly crude effort to connect Ganelon with the traitors of antiquity is offered by one of the Italian versions of the *Roland*, cited by Müller[1] in a note:

> "Ses ancesur firent ingresme fellune,
> E fellonie tut or ave in costume;
> In capitoille de Rome ça'n fe une,

[1] Vid. *Roland* (ed. Müller), p. 193, note.

Jullio Çesar onçient il per ordure
Pois oit il malvase sepolture,
Chi in fogo ardent et angosos mis fure." [1]

The ridiculous genealogies which were invented by the late poets for their traitors as well as for their heroes became so involved that they drive us, as Gautier admits, to despair: "Autant de poëmes, autant de généalogies différentes." [2] It evidently simplified matters to agree that the heads of the three principal *gestes*, Charles, Doon and Garin were all born on the same day; thus, the three families made a fair start! [3]

The trouble over Ganelon was far from settled when Charles had put him and thirty of his kin to death.[4] From what has been seen of the essential principle of revenge in the feudal code, the activity of Ganelon's surviving relatives is not surprising. Only by the spilling of more blood can the insult done to their family be wiped out. On the other hand, the loyal vassals are ever ready to go one step farther in stamping out this dangerous brood. The following words of Aymeri de Narbonne, left behind after the Spanish expedition as a bulwark against the Saracens, beseech Charles to show no mercy to Ganelon when he shall be tried. He ought to be punished in a way—

" 'Si que trestuit, li grant et li menor
L'oient conter jusqu'en Inde major,
Et que poor en aient traitor,
Si que jamès vers lor lige seignor
N'osent panser einsi grant desennor.'"
Aymeri de Narbonne, 1283–87.

[1] In the *Chanson des Saisnes*, v. ii, p. 66, for the exigency of the rhyme, Cain is made of the same lineage as the traitors opposed to Charles!

[2] *Epopées*, i, p. 127, note.

[3] Vid. *Doon de Maience*, p. 162.

[4] G. Paris in writing of *Le Roman de la Geste de Monglane* has reprinted the detailed description of Ganelon's death in one of the two prose redactions of *Galien*. Vid. *Romania*, xii, pp. 10, 11.

In *Gaydon*, where the traitors play such an important rôle in their successful efforts to alienate Gaydon from the king, they contemplate nothing less than vengeance upon Charles' person. When Aulori sees the success of his poison:

> "'Par Deu, dist il, nos puisons viennent bien;
> S'or en menjüent li rois ne li princier,
> Ainz la complie sera Ganes vengiez.'"
>
> *Gaydon*, p. 7.

In *Huon de Bordeaux* Amauri hopes to kill Charles and possess the crown for himself:

> "'Damedix doinst que Karlos soit ocis,
> France ert sans oir, si tenrai le païs;
> Ains que l'ans past, arai Karlon mordri.'"
>
> *Huon de Bordeaux*, p. 21.

In *Macaire* the traitor's efforts are devoted to seducing Charles' queen:

> "Segnur, or entendés e siés certan
> Qe la cha de Magançe, e darer e davan,
> Ma non ceso de far risa e buban;
> Senpre avoit guere cun Rainaldo da Mote Alban,
> Et si traï Oliver e Rolan,
> E li doçe pere e ses compagna gran.
> Or de la raine vole far traïman;
> Par son voloir elo non reman
> Q'elo non onischa l'inperer K. man."
>
> *Macaire*, p. 18.

It will be remembered that the cause of the popularity of the traitors in the epic was found in the relations between the monarch and his great vassals in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. At the time when the Capetian monarchy was already strong and casting off the shackles imposed by the great feudal lords, these latter still retained great power and flattered their pride with reminiscences of the earlier feudal period when their word had been law. To these retrospective sentiments the *trouvères* catered; at first, with

quasi-historical poems; later, with series of adventures which had scant foundation upon fact. It seems certain, after the studies of Kurth and Rajna, that under the late Carolingians there had existed plotters around the monarch. We know also of the tendency among the feudal poets to ascribe the events under discussion to an antecedent period,—that of Charlemagne and of his immediate successors. The traitors, then, as a type may represent the hostile vassals of the degenerate Carolingian monarchs seen with the eyes of men governed by the later feudal and chivalric ideals. But the rigor and bitterness of the accusations made against the traitors in some of the poems seem to indicate that they were very real persons to an audience of the twelfth century. The passages that follow are hard to account for except upon the hypothesis that such self-seeking individuals were at court working against the interests of the feudal lords. In other words, there must have been traitors in contemporary politics as well as in the poetical history of Charlemagne. Garin speaks of these evil counsellors as of those

> "'Qui le sejour aiment et repouser,
> Et au couchier le vin et le claré.
> Jà par tels gens en pris ne monterez.'"
>
> *Romans de Garin le Loherain*, v. i, pp. 80, 81.

In the *Chanson des Saisnes*, after a quarrel between Charles and his proud vassals, one of the latter tells the King that all the trouble comes from his heeding his evil counsellors:

> "'Sire, dist Salemonz, i. don querre vos os:
> Li felon nos feront desserver par lor los
> Qui à vos nos meslerent; mar i furent si os:
> Trancherons lor les testes et les nés et les os.'"
>
> *Chanson des Saisnes*, v. i, p. 76.

This seems to be the echo of some particular grudge and of the desire to get even with the king's favorites. Again, in *Aiol* no specific charge is made against the traitors. They

are mar-alls at court and in general opposed to honesty and fairness as represented by the heroes:

"A Loeys resmest li tere et li pais.
Li traitor de France l'ont de guere entrepris:
Loeys ne set mie u se puisse vertir,
N'en quel de ses chastieus il se puisse garir
Enfressi que al jor que vos poés oir
Que il sa serour done a un conte gentil:
Il ot a non Elies, molt fu preus et ardis,
Ainc mieudre chevaliers nen ot auberc vestis;
Quant il ot espousee la seror Loeys,
Son droiturier signor par qui il ert cheris,
Les traitors de France par armes acoilli
La ou il les pot prendre, ainc raençon n'en prist
Ne avoir ne loier onques n'en requelli:
Del prendre et de l'ochire estoit cascuns tous fis,
Et con plus ert haus hom, plus grant justice en fist;
Ainc n'espargna le grant nient plus que le petit.
Ançois que li ans fust passés ne acomplis,
Ot il si bien le roi aquité son pais
Que il n'avoit nul home qui guerre li fesist."

Aiol, 25–43.

Judging from the twelfth and thirteenth century poems, envy, lust, lying, sometimes cowardice and even blasphemy were the badge of all this tribe. Time and again we find the traitors accomplishing their ends by bribes. It evidently took a strong man to resist temptation thus offered, and the king himself was frequently a victim. He who wrote these words was probably right:

"Avarisce est de tous péchiés commenchemens." [1]

Envy and jealousy caused by the bestowal of fiefs or by the contraction of feudal marriages was a frequent cause of alienation.[2]

But all the traitors were not equally dignified figures. In *Gaydon* and in *Parise la Duchesse* they are downright

[1] *Roman de Mahomet* (ed. Reinaud et Michel), p. 26.
[2] Cf. *Raoul de Cambrai; Les Loherains; Daurel et Beton.*

cowards, employing poisons and ambushes to accomplish their objects. Grifon in *Gaufrey* (pp. 94, 110) is a coward, while Archambaut in *Doon de Maience* (p. 137) is the incarnation of all that is base and mean. Further, he is brutal and lascivious (*Doon de Maience*, p. 6). Nothing, indeed, the poet can say is too bad for this Archambaut. When he finds himself defeated by Doon in single combat he is so *forsené* that he denies God himself:

> " 'Dex, je te renoi chi et les tieues bontés.
> Jamès jour n'amerai ne toi ne tes privés;
> Que quant plus je t'aour et serf, et plus me hés,
> Et plus me vient ennui, mort et maléurtés.'
> Ainsi le desloial Damedieu renoia.
> A li méisme dist et Damedieu jura
> Que jamez hermitain en bois ne trouvera
> Que il ne meite mort, tantost que le verra,
> Ne moine ne rendu il n'i espargnera,
> Toutez rendations à tous jours destruira
> Et moustiers et yglises trestous combruisera,
> Crucefix et ymages ja n'i deportera."
>
> *Doon de Maience*, p. 154.

Such violence of treatment is rare. As a rule, the traitors are Christians like other normal people. Only the Saracens are accustomed to deny their gods of wood and of stone. The wicked Macaire in *Aiol* completes his ignominy by turning Saracen, but his conversion is rather introduced as a comic feature.[1] Even the Saracens suspect the motives of his action and blame him. He is finally quartered in the conventional way befitting a traitor (*Aiol*, 10903).

In *Parise la Duchesse* the traitors play the same rôle as in the first part of *Doon de Maience*. They are leagued together for the undoing of the Duchess, who they fear will give birth to an heir. The following verses show two of these devils plotting her ruin:

[1] In *Aye d'Avignon* (p. 51) the traitor Berenger, urged by desire of vengeance, embraces the cause of the Saracens.

" 'Madame est eschapée, à malaïçon Dé!
Elle est grosse d'anfant, bien lo m'a l'on conté;
Tex oirs en puet issir et croitre et emender
Qui nos fera touz pendre i an aut encroer.
Qui or saroit consoil qu'il la peust destorber,
Il ne le devroit mie ne covrir ne celer.'
'Seignor, dist Aumauguins, ja fui je fiz Herdré,
Qui ainz de traïson ne puet estre lassé;
Moult par savoit mes peres traïson desmener;
Dont seroit ce merveille se j'an sui esgarez.'"

Parise la Duchesse, p. 6.

The verses just quoted show what a change had come over the traitors since the noble figure of Ganelon was traced. Personal initiative is dispensed with. Men are traitors now in spite of themselves, thanks to the family influence, and no form of crime is too base to be practised by them. There is a passage in *Gaydon* which sums up the complete programme of their wickedness. The following is the parting advice given by a traitor bishop to his nephew:

"Dist a Guiot: 'Biau niés, or entendez:
Se voz volez faire mes volentez
Et mon commant, la bataille vaintrez.
Et tout avant à Dammeldeu voez
Que ja à home ne tenras loiautez;
Vo seignor lige ja foi ne porterez,
Les loiaus homes traïssiez et vendez,
Le mal hauciez et le bien abatez.
Se voz à home compaingnie prennez,
En devant lui tout adez le loez,
Et en derrier à la gent le blasmez.
Les povres gens laidengiez et gabez,
Les orphenins à tort desheritez,
Les vesves dammes lor doayres tolez,
Les murtrissors, les larrons souztenez.
Et sainte eglise adez deshonorez,
Prestres et clers fuiez et eschievez,
Rendus et moinnes, par tout les desrobez,
Et cordeliers et jacobins batez.
Petits anfans en la boe gietez,
Et coiement les prennez et mordez;

S'on ne voz voit, as mains les estrainglez.
Les vielles gens empoingniez et boutez,
Ou an visaiges au mains les escopez.
Les abéies escilliez et gastez,
Et les nonnains toutes abandonnez.
En touz lez lieus là où voz esterez
Hardiement mentez et parjurez,
Que ja vo foi nul jor ne mentirez
Devant ice que voz la main perdrez.
Se voz ce faitez que voz oï avez,
Ja à nul jor desconfiz ne serez.'
'Oïl, dist il, encore pis assez.'" [1]

Gaydon, pp. 194, 195.

Here is the same code more briefly expressed:

"'Je te chastoi, biaus filleus Aulori,
Que n'aiez cure de dammeldeu servir,
Ne de voir dire, se ne cuides mentir.
Se vois preudomme, panse de l'escharnir,
De ta parole, se tu puez, le honnis.
Ardez les villes les bors et les maisnils,
Metez par terre autex et crucefix,
Par ce serez honorez et servis.'" [2]

Amis et Amiles, 1625–32.

These passages, conventional as they are, give an interesting catalogue of feudal vices. When compared with the very different advice given to the young heroes, they give a clear idea of what a feudal audience esteemed and loathed. There is such a note of genuineness and reality in these passages that we must admit the familiarity of a feudal audience with such cruelty, perjury, disloyalty, injustice and sacrilege in order to explain their significance.

The traitor has been seen to be in general true to his primitive rôle. In no case can we better employ the word *type*. If we should examine in detail the *motifs* of such

[1] A parallel is offered by *Le Miracle de Théophile* in *Théâtre français au moyen âge* (ed. Monmerqué et Michel), pp. 145, 146.

[2] Cf. *Bauduin de Sebourc*, chant I, 582–591; chant I, 666–669.

poems as *Les Loherains, Huon de Bordeaux, Les Quatre Fils Aymon, Gaydon* and *Amis et Amiles* we should find the traitors at the court of the king or of some great vassal always seeking their own ends. The only difference is that in the older poems they employ more worthy and fair means to obtain those ends; while in the later poems like *Gaydon, Macaire, Berte aus grans piés* or *Parise la Duchesse* no means are too despicable for them. Cowardice and treachery are always blamed, but simple brutality and cruelty of the kind we find in *Les Loherains* and *Raoul de Cambrai* were certainly not discountenanced in the early feudal period. So intractable are these fierce vassals until their thirst for revenge is satisfied, that no gentle arguments of the peace-maker availed:

> "Grans est la guerre qui onques ne prist fin;
> Sainte Marie! mervoille est a oïr,
> Qu'apres les peres la reprenent li fil."
>
> *Mort Garin*, p. 146.

Notwithstanding the general adherence to the type, there will be felt to be a wide difference between the Ganelons and the Fromonts of the early poems and the Macaires and Archambauts of the later poems. As a dignified and sympathetic figure the traitor degenerates. But one should read *Berte aus grans piés* and the Franco-Italian poem of *Macaire* to realize what good literary use a skilful poet could make of this contrast between the evil and the good.[1] These poems have all the traits of a modern novel and are marvelously interesting from the psychological point of view. But, as said at the outset, no traitor stands out more clear-cut and more dignified in his treason, no sinner among them enlists our interest and our sympathy more than Ganelon.

To express their abhorrence of the traitor the *trouvères*

[1] It has been frequently remarked that the Italian court epic poets especially developed the traitor characters and episodes.

were ever ready. Their conventional spokesman was old Naimon of Bavaria. Had it not been for his indefatigable efforts in suppressing violence and exposing fraud, the epic king would have been drawn to ruin by the traitors. Naimon is a curious embodiment of justice and clear-sightedness. He lacks any human traits (with rare exceptions as in *Gui de Bourgogne* and *Fierabras*), but appears rather as a mechanical check upon evil. His counsels are always just, and, when not followed, evil results. Two verses in *Gaufrey* epitomize Naimon's rôle in the epic:

> "Naimez son conseiller est si endoctriné
> Et si het plus traïtres que homme qui soit né."
>
> *Gaufrey*, p. 147.

When he has exposed his plan for arriving at any truth, Charles acquiesces:

> "'Certes, dist Karles, vous avés bien parlé;
> Je le ferai, puisqe le me loés.'"
>
> *Huon de Bordeaux*, p. 285.

There is a comforting belief apparent in the ultimate triumph of right:

> "Tous jours vont traïtours à male destinée;
> U en près ou en loing, jà n'i aront durée."
>
> *Fierabras*, p. 188.
>
> "'Traïs soit il en fin qui à traïr entent!
> Nus traïtre ne peut pas vivre longuement
> Et, se il longues vit, che est honteusement.'"
>
> *Doon de Maience*, p. 234.
>
> "Bien avez oï dire mainte fois et retraire
> Que traïson et murdre convient k'en la fin paire."
>
> *Berte aus grans piés*, 1663–64.

But it is in their death, above all, that the wicked are separated from the just. The devils then claim their own. The manner of their death is as humiliating as its consequences are sure. The hermit in *Girart de Rossillon* seems to voice the Church sentiment:

"Que la devinitaz e li autor
Nos mostrent en la lei au redemptor
Qual iustise on deit faire de tracor
Desmenbrar a cheval ardre a chalor
La poudre de celui lai o chai por
Ja pois ni creistera erbe ne labor
Arbres ne rins qui traie a verdor."
Girart de Rossillon (Ox. MS.), 7505–11.

The disgrace of the traitor's death compared with the bliss of the just soul as it is borne away upon angels' wings is well brought out in the following passages from *Doon de Maience*. When the good hermit dies a violent death:

"Tout estendu l'a jus à la terre versé;
Es vous venir lez angres, qui l'ame en ont porté."
Doon de Maience, pp. 3, 4.

When the traitor Salemon has killed one of the three little sons of Guy, the innocent child

"Mort quéi tout envers, onques ne souspira,
Et li angre du chiel l'esperit emporta
Comme d'un innocent, qui ainc mal ne pensa."
Id., p. 11.

Compare these with the following:

"Salemon est noiez à sa maléurée.
Li déable d'enfer en ont l'ame portée
En enfer le puant, où ele est embrasée,
Dont jamez nen istra: si sera comperée
La mortel traïson que il a demenée."
Id., p. 15.

"En la plache revint, où le glouton trouva,
A i. cheval courant partout le traïna;
Et quant l'ot traïné, ens u feu le geta,
Qui grant estoit espris et fierement flamba.
Quant il fu ens u feu et la vie en sevra,
Le déable d'enfer l'esperit emporta,
Bruiant de grant ravine, que chascun l'avisa;
U parfont puis d'enfer là le tourmentera."
Id., p. 159.

One traitor about to die humorously remarks:

"'Se je vois en enfer, selon m'entencion,
Je trouverai laiens mon oncle Ganelon
Pinabel de Sorence, et mon parent Guion;
Nous seron moult grant geste en cele region.'"
Aye d'Avignon, p. 22.

A few passages quoted without comment from late mediæval authors will serve to show the wide literary currency of the traitors as familiar spirits in the Middle Age:[1]

. . . . "l'us de traitour
Que bien sevent li plusour
Que Judas fist son seignour
Et Guenes l'emperaour."
Chansons du Châtl. de Coucy, iii[e] chanson.

"As gladly doon thise homicydes alle,
That in awayt liggen to mordre men.
O false mordrer, lurking in thy den!
O newe Scariot, newe Genilon!"
The Nonne Preestes Tale (ed. Skeat), 4414–17.

"'And but I do, god take on me vengeance
As foul as ever had Geniloun of France!'"
The Shipmannes Tale (ed. Skeat), 1383–84.

"Este tiene dos hijos: el mayor, heredero de su estado y al parecer de sus buenas costumbres, y el menor no sé yo de que sea heredero, sino de las traiciones de Bellido y de los embustes de Galalón."
Don Quijote, Part I, ch. 28.

"Pedroso cita un auto en que Carlo-Magno se lanza a conquistar la Tierra Santa, donde Galalón le vende por treinta dineros, y Carlo-Magno muere crucificado."
Menéndez y Pelayo, *Calderón y su teatro*, p. 122.

"Gianni de' Soldanier credo che sia
Più là con Ganellone e Tribaldello."
Inferno, xxxii, 122.

[1] For three curious nineteenth century oral traditions bearing on the matter treated in this chapter vid. Henri Carnoy in *Romania*, xi, pp. 410–13.

WOMAN.

The three most essential character types of the *chansons de geste* have already been treated. The king, the faithful vassal and the traitor are certainly in the early poems the personages upon whom the attention is fixed and upon whose relations the action turns. Before leaving the Christian ranks and passing to a study of the Saracens who belong also among the most venerable creations of the French epic, there remain two categories of personages who cannot longer be neglected: woman and the *bourgeois* or *vilain* hero.

The appearance of woman and of the *bourgeois* hero in the rude masculine epic becomes a perfectly natural phenomenon when we recollect the great social changes of the twelfth century. Woman cult, which was the result partly of a literary fashion and partly of a more intimate association of woman in the in-door *château* life of the period, is especially reflected in the French *romans d'aventure*. In this chapter of our study we shall clearly see how profoundly the spirit of the chivalrous *romans d'aventure* permeated the primitive warlike spirit of the *chansons de geste*. In the next chapter we shall see the different forces which brought the *bourgeoisie* into literary prominence. It is sufficient to remember in regard to woman how completely her social status changed during the period covered by the *chansons de geste*. That she does not figure prominently in the earliest epic poems is no proof that she was not revered and respected in the eleventh century. Indeed, the sparse references we have to woman in the earliest poems depict her possessed of dignity and authority. But she had no place in a purely heroic poetry,—in poems devoted exclusively to the narration of warlike deeds upon the field of battle. When, however, the literary scene changes with the gradual

shifting of interest from the battlefield to the *foyer*, even the heroic poems inevitably become at once more domestic and more sentimental.

Not until the twelfth century did woman take her place in mediæval literature as an end in herself, as a subject worthy of description and of detailed analysis. In the literature anterior to that period she is introduced, if at all, as an incident or as an accident. She rarely emerges from the obscurity in which society confines her. We shall first take up the older poems in order the better to understand the development of woman's literary importance as our period advances. One familiar with the various lights in which woman was regarded during the later Middle Age will not be surprised at the contradictory testimony as to her social and moral status. We shall study the poems as they represent her in her various spheres and activities: as maid, as young wife, as the mature wife and counsellor, as the mother of warriors.

Here, as before, the *Roland* is the point of departure. It is the unique figure of Aude in the Christian ranks that interests us and that interested the audience of the eleventh century. One always thinks of Aude in connection with Roland and Oliver; for she was the *fiancée* of the one and sister of the other. The old legend of her presence at the fierce combat outside of Vienne and of her betrothal to Roland may be read in the thirteenth century poem of *Girart de Viane*. But her treatment in the *Roland* is much more primitive, though it supposes the knowledge of her betrothal before Roland's departure with Charles into Spain. This is all the poet says of her; it is evidently of minor importance, but gains by its very simplicity. When Charles without Roland has returned to Aix:

> "As li venue Alde, une bele dame;
> Ço dist al rei: 'U est Rollanz li catanies,

Qui me jurat cume sa per à prendre?'
Carles en ad e dulur e pesance,
Pluret des oilz, tiret sa barbe blance:
'Soer, chiere amie, d'hume mort me demandes.
Jo t'en durrai mult esforciet eschange,
Ço est Loewis, mielz ne sai jo qu'en parle:
Il est mes filz e si tendrat mes marches.'
Alde respunt: 'Cist moz mei est estranges.
Ne place Deu ne ses sainz ne ses angles
Après Rollant que jo vive remaigne!'
Pert la culur, chiet as piez Carlemagne,
Sempres est morte."

Roland, 3708–21.

There are several points to notice in this simple appearance of Aude: instead of a description of her charms as Bertrand of Bar-sur-Aube at a later period would have detailed, she is dignifiedly styled *une bele dame;* again, she aspires to be the *per*, the equal of the man to whom she has given her heart; moreover, she has the right and the independence to refuse *Loewis* as a substitute for Roland. There is no possibility of replacing Roland in Aude's broken heart. The type of fidelity, she has nothing to do but die. It would be a mistake to credit the poet of the *Roland* with the charm which his allusion to Aude has for us. The episode of her grief and sudden death is too soon passed over to permit us to think that it made much impression upon the audience. Aude's death was but one of many sad consequences of the death of Roland,—perhaps the least important to an eleventh century audience eager rather to hear of the punishment meted out to Ganelon. Faithfulness was expected not only in the wife but in the betrothed maiden by the men who had done them the honor to ask for their hand. Remaining at home in the secluded life of the feudal *château*, the women must have had time to develop traits of character very different from those engendered by the more intimate and frivolous relations between the sexes in the thirteenth century. To be sure, when Aude falls lifeless *Franceis barun*

en plurent, si la plaignent (v. 3722); but they are hardly surprised at this display of Aude's depth of feeling and devotion. Before leaving this poem, note that at its close, when the Saracen Bramimunde is converted, an excellent opportunity for a romantic marriage is neglected, and the baptism alone is emphasized.

The feminine element is practically lacking in the *Voyage de Charlemagne*. There seems implied, however, the primitive idea of equality in the opening lines:

> "Charles li emperere reguardet sa moillier;
> Ele fu coronee al plus bel et al mielz." [1]
>
> *Voyage de Charlemagne*, v. 5–6.

After her intended pleasantry at the King's expense, she begs forgiveness:

> "'Emperere, dist ele, mercit por amor Deu!
> Ja sui jo vostre femme, si me cuidai joer.'"
>
> *Id.*, 32–33.

But to no purpose. Charles with a touch of perhaps primitive brutality twice threatens to cut off her head if she does not reveal the name of the monarch who exceeds him in glory.

Passing over these early mentions of woman, we find her in a new light in the oldest poems of the feudal cycle. Luchaire has shown that though the Roman system of female inheritance was opposed to the Germanic system of exclusion, the fact that the former was favored by the Church led to its final adoption toward the end of the twelfth century. In the meantime, usage was not fixed and woman's claims needed to be vigorously presented. Her importance as a feudal personage, involved in the transfer of fiefs, is well illustrated in such poems as *Raoul de Cambrai* and *Les*

[1] "Un mariage royal pouvait être considéré comme une véritable association à la couronne."—Luchaire, *Institutions monarchiques*, v. i, p. 145.

Loherains. She was to be reckoned with in politics; she was to be depicted in her true rôle in the poetry.[1]

It is as counsellor in feudal matters that Aalais, mother of Raoul, first appears in *Raoul de Cambrai*. She has the right to give advice, since it is through her fiefs as sister of the king that Raoul is one of the great vassals. This is the way the reckless son treats his mother's counsels:

> " 'Maldehait ait, je le taing por lanier,
> Le gentil homme, qant il doit tornoier,
> A gentil dame qant se va consellier!
> Dedens vos chambres vos alez aasier:
> Beveiz puison por vo pance encraissier,
> Et si pensez de boivre et de mengier;
> Car d'autre chose ne devez mais plaidier.' "
>
> *Raoul de Cambrai*, 1100–06.

Likewise when the wife of Beuve d'Aigremont begs her husband to take her advice on a matter of feudal service, he repulses her with coarse brutality (*Les Quatre Fils Aymon*, p. 17). This note of brutality between men and women of the same family is heard more than once in the older poems. It seems as though it were intended to banish woman back to her apartments from which she had temporarily emerged to take her part in state matters. To return to *Raoul de Cambrai*, the scene does not end where we left it; it has a more human outcome. Aalais, hot-headed like her son, curses him:

> " 'Et qant por moi ne le viex or laisier,
> Cil Damerdiex qi tout a a jugier,
> Ne t'en ramaint sain ne sauf ne entier!' "
>
> *Raoul de Cambrai*, 1131–33.

Then, still more unhappy than before, she goes into a church and, kneeling before the crucifix, offers this mother's prayer:

[1] Cf. Luchaire, *Manuel des Institutions françaises*, pp. 166–169.

" 'Glorieus Diex qi en crois fustes mis,
Si com c'est voirs q'al jor del venredi
Fustes penez qant Longis vos feri,
Por pecheors vostre sanc espandi,
Ren moi mon filg sain et sauf et gari.
Lasse dolante! a grant tort l'ai maldi.
Ja l'ai je, lase! si doucement norri;
Se il i muert, bien doit estre gehi,
Ce iert mervelle s'a coutel ne m'oci.' "

Id., 1141–49.

The same coarseness and brutality, contrasting strongly with most of the later thirteenth century poems, crops out in the scene (*Raoul de Cambrai*, 1300–33) preceding the burning of the convent of Origny. This vivid scene shows us Raoul hurling the most insulting epithets at the Mother Superior of the convent. When Raoul was killed shortly after this by the bastard Bernier, once the companion squire of Raoul, his dead body was borne back to Cambrai upon a shield. Then the mother's grief begins anew:

" 'Mieudres ne fu Rolans ne Oliviers
Qe fustes, fix, por vos amis aidier!
Qant moi remenbre del traitor B.
Qi vos a mort, j'en quit vive erragier!'
Lors chiet pasmée; on la cort redrecier.
De pitié pleure mainte franche mollier."

Id. 3551–56.

Coupled with the natural grief of the mother is that of the parent left without an heir,—a serious matter in feudal times:

" 'Diex! dist la dame, cum est mes cuers maris!
Se l'eüst mort un quens poesteïs,
De mon duel fust l'une motiés jus mis.
Qui lairai je ma terre et mon païs?
Or n'i ai oir, par foi le vos plevis.' "

Id., 3596–3600.

The grief of Raoul's *fiancée* is even more touching, and, though much more elaborated than the tragic grief of Aude,

the scene still retains some primitive traits. When Heluïs arrives upon the news of her lover's death :

"El mostier entre comme feme esmarie ;
Isnelement a haute vois escrie :
'Sire R., con dure departie !
Biax dous amis, car baisiés vostre amie.
La vostre mors doit estre trop haïe . . . .
Mors felonese, trop par fustes hardie
Qi a tel prince osas faire envaïe !
Por seul itant qe je fui vostre amie,
N'avrai signor en trestoute ma vie.' . . .
'Sire R., dist la franche pucele,
Vos me jurastes dedens une chapele.
Puis me reqist Harduïns de Nivele
Qi tint Braibant, cele contrée bele ;
Mais nel presise por l'onnor de Tudele.
Sainte Marie, glorieuse pucele,
Porquoi ne part mes quers soz ma mamele
Qant celui per cui devoie estre ancele ?
Or porrira cele tenre maissele
Et cil vair oel dont clere est la prunele.
La vostre alaine estoit tos jors novele.'"

Id., 3665–93.

She tells the mother Aalais to go seek repose, and she insists upon watching alone (3701–15). And when it is all over :

"En Pontiu va Heluïs au vis fier ;
Molt la reqierent et haut home et princier,
Mais n'en vost nul ne prendre ne baillier."

Id., 3729–31.

Thus, disdaining social prestige and feudal alliance, Heluïs rested true to the memory of Raoul. The author, while preserving in the first half of his poem the rude spirit of the primitive version, has consciously developed this scene of inconsolable sadness. Just enough is said ; the rest is suggested. Nowhere in these poems has the grief of a lover been drawn so sympathetically and so naturally.

Les Loherains presents another example of this devotion,

likewise simple and natural. When Beatrix hears the news of the death of her husband Begon:

"La dame l'ot, à la terre chaï,
Quant se redresce, si a gieté un cri;
Vient à la biere, si a signor pris,
Ele li baise et iels et bouce et vis,
Si le regrete com jà porrez oïr."
Romans de Garin le Loherain, v. ii, p. 267.

It will be remembered that this was the hero of whom it was said:

"Gentis hons fu, moult l'amoient si chien,"

and on his tomb they carved:

"Ce fu li mieuldres qui sor destrier séist."
Id., v. ii, p. 272.

The prominence of the queen at court and her part in intrigues is clearly evidenced also in *Les Loherains*. Throughout these poems the queen sympathizes with the Lorrains and uses her influence to incite the weak Pepin to encourage the quarrels among the Bordelais who are the antagonists of the Crown. It is in policy and in feudal supremacy that this queen is interested. For example, in the *Mort Garin* when this same Blancheflor hears from Rigaut how he has killed the four sons of the traitor Fromont, she exclaims with more frankness than charity:

"'Pléust a Deu, qui en la croiz fu mis,
Li remanans fust ore tot ainsi!'"
Mort Garin, p. 70.

And again in the same connection:

"Ot le la dame, de rire esbofi."

This heartlessness in woman did not shock the sensibilities of the audience. But there is place even in these cruel poems for tender feelings. Hear this lament of a mother over her two sons:

"'Li mien enfant, com iestes hui emblée!
Lasse! dolente, com sui en grant nerté!
Mon fier lignaje et mon grant parenté
Voi en cest siégle durement tormenter;
Terre, car euvre; lairai moi enz coler:
Po pris ma vie, ma joie et ma santé.'"

Id., p. 97.

Already in a poem of this cycle is found that conventional detailed description of a young girl's beauty which became one of the favorite themes with the later *trouvères*. It seems out of place with the sternness of the rest of the poem, and offers a charming relief after the bitterness and bloodshed of the preceding narrative. It is Blancheflor who is brought to Paris to be given in marriage to Garin. (The subsequent poems relate how the King Pepin appropriated her instead):

"Et la pucelle est entree en Paris
Moult richement, o li dux Auberi.
Desafublée en fut en un samis;
Li palefrois sor quoi la dame sist
Estoit plus blans que n'est la flor de lis;
Li lorains vaut cent mars de parisis,
Et la sambue nuns plus riche ne vit.
La dame ert gente et de cor et de vis,
Bouche espessete et les dens ot petis,
Il sunt plus blans qu'ivoire planéis;
Hanches bassetes, blans et vermeil li vis,
Les ieus rians et bien fais les sorcis;
C'est la plus belle qui onques mais naquit.
Sor ses espaules li gisent si blon crin:
En son chief ot un chapelet petit
D'or et de pieres qui mout bien li avint.
Toutes les rues emplissent de Paris;
Dist l'uns à l'autre: 'Comme belle dame a ci!
Elle devroit un roiaume tenir.'"

Romans de Garin le Loherain, v. i, pp. 297, 298.

This description enumerates the details of youthful beauty in a woman which became conventional after the popularity of the Breton poets. Such a passage as that just quoted alone

would warrant Gaston Paris in assigning the poem as it stands to the last part of the twelfth century. This slender fair-haired type was produced in French literature as soon as woman in herself became worthy of detailed description.[1] The moment people began to hear about and to read about beautiful women it became necessary to describe her outward features in some detail. This literary type was produced, then, once for all as the ideal of France, and it is doubtful if it has changed since the twelfth century.

But before considering the type of young maid and her relations to the hero, it will be well to look more closely at woman as wife and mother. By so doing we shall get a truer idea of the mediæval conception of woman's duty. Krabbes[2] has rightly noted that the devotion of wives to husbands is an essential feature of the early poems and of those which were afterwards modelled directly upon them. This characteristic has already been noted in more than one of the preceding quotations. Not only is the bond between husband and wife, but between mother and son, very strong. There is no reason to doubt of a strong family affection, if reliance be placed in these epic poems.

Les Enfances Vivien offers one of the most beautiful *regrets* of a mother over her son, to serve as an example, and the Swedish editors of the poem have done well to call attention to it. The Saracens demand little Vivien, then only seven years old, as ransom for his father Garin whom they hold captive. The whole passage expressing the grief of the mother at parting from her son is worth quoting. Note especially the twelfth *tirade* for the familiar details upon which the mother's love lingers:

[1] Cf., *e. g.*, in other *genres*: *Floire et Blancheflor* (ed. Elz.), pp. 107–109; *Erec et Enide* (ed. Förster), 411–441, 1554 f.; *Cliges* (ed. Förster), 770 f.; *Aucassin et Nicolette* (3rd ed. Suchier), p. 16.

[2] Theodor Krabbes, *Die Frau im altfranzösischen Karlsepos.*

XI.

" 'Filz Vivien, ce dist la gentis dame,
Ne vos envoi, bels filz, por armes prendre,
Ne por halberc, por escut, ne por lance,
Mais por la mort dont ge suis a fiance.
Filz Vivien, por ce vas en Espaigne ;
Li Sarrazin en prenront la vengence,
Filz Vivien, de vos belles enfances,
Qui molt estoient dolces et avenantes.

XII.

" 'Filz Vivien, or prenrai de ton poil.
Et de ta char des ongles de tes dois,
Qui plus sont blanc que ermine ne nois,
Enpres mon cuer les lierai estroit,
Les reverrai as festes et as mois.
Encore me membre, bels filz, del mot cortois
Que me deïstes, n'a mie encor un mois ;
Dedens ma chambre seïstes ioste moi,
Cant ge ploroie dan Garin le cortois,
Vos me deïstes : 'Belle mere, tais toi,
La mort mon pere que me ramentevois,
Se ge vif tant que porte mes conrois,
Parmi Espaigne ne porra remanoir
Que la vengence tote prise n'en soit.'
Lors oi-ge ioie, bels filz, adont me toi.

XIII.

" 'Filz Vivien, la gentis dame dist,
Tu fais ansi con l'aignelet petit
Que laist sa mere, cant voit lo louf venir,
Et il i trueve si tres male merci
Qu'il le mengue et met tot a declin.
Or vendra pasques, une feste en avril,
Cil damoisel sont chaucie et vesti,
Vont en riviere por lor gibier tenir,
En lor poinz portent falcons et esmeris ;
Ne te verrai ne aler ne venir.
He mort ! car rien, si me pren et oci !
Duel et domage est or mais, cant je vif.' "

Les Enfances Vivien, tirades xi, xii, xiii.

In the same strain of tender affection compare the *regret* of

Eremborc in *Jourdains de Blaivies*. She is the wife of the faithful vassal Renier to whom little Jourdain has been confided for safe-keeping. Rather than betray their charge, these parents hand over to the traitor Fromont their own son:

> "'Or revenront cil biau jor en esté,
> Que m'en irai desor ces murs ester,
> Ces dammoisiax vèrrai de ton aé
> Par devant moi et venir et aler,
> A la quintaine et à l'escu jouster
> Et corre as barres et luitier et verser;
> Lors referai si mon cuer replorer,
> Molt m'esmervoil se ne l'estuet crever.'"
>
> *Jourdains de Blaivies*, 656–663.

These passages, which might be multiplied, leave no doubt as to the kind of affection which the feudal mother had for her son.[1] As wives, too, the women are usually models of constancy, love and self-sacrifice. For illustrations there is an embarrassment of choice. Let us take Guibourc, wife of Guillaume d'Orange, Ermengard, wife of Aymeri de Narbonne and Berte, wife of Girart de Roussillon;—these three from the feudal epic; and Parise, wife of Raymond, Duke of Saint-Gilles, the latter from a poem which is almost a *roman d'aventure*.

As for Guibourc, *La Prise d'Orange* relates how Guillaume, son of Aymeri, wooed and won the fair Saracen princess Orable. But in the poem of *Aliscans* she appears in a less romantic guise as the childless wife of the hero of the Guillaume cycle. When speaking of this Guillaume in a preceding chapter reference was made to the parting between the devoted couple when the husband left Orange to demand help from Louis at Paris. Orange was in great straits and Guibourc was left behind to defend the city.

[1] An interesting scene, too diffuse for quotation, is found at the close of *Les Quatre Fils Aymon* where the four sons take leave of their mother.

Note the vigor and confidence of her determination to guard well the place:

"'Je remanrai en Orenge le grant
Aveuc les dames, dont il a céenz tant.
Cascune aura le hauberc jaserant
Et en son cief le vert elme luisant,
Et à sa coste aura chaint le bon branc,
Au col l'escu, el poing l'espie trenchant.
Si sont chaens chevalier ne sai quant
Ke delivrastes de la gent Tervagant;
Deseur ces murs monterons là devant,
Bien desfendrons se Turc vont assaillant.
Jou ere armée à loi de combatant.
Par saint Denis, que je trai à garant,
N'i a paien, Sarrasin, ne Persant,
Se je l'ataing d'une piere en ruant,
Ne le convingne chaiir de l'auferrant.'"

Aliscans, 1948–62.

It is not credible that under any condition the defense of a strong place was confided to women, though we have more than one instance of their personal bravery in times of stress. It is important, however, to notice the rôle of dignified heroism assigned here to woman as sharer in the projects and dangers of her warrior husband.

Not less complete is the active association of Ermengard in the deeds of Aymeri de Narbonne. When the old hero is laid out upon his death-bed, as they think, it is his wife who watches over him *en la sale maior* and who does not lose hope:

"Ovri les euz li quens, si esgarda
Et vit plorer mil chevaliers loials;
Devant lui fu as piez dame Hermenjarz,
Toz ses chevex ronpi et descira
Et Aymeri son seignor regreta....
'Sire, por Deu, dist ele, respasez,
Et si ne morez mie.'"

La Mort Aymeri de Narbonne, v. 267 f.

However, Aymeri is reserved for more prodigies of valor.

He recovers, and when a great army of Saracens appears before Narbonne, he calls for his arms and mounts his steed. His last words are of comfort to Ermengard:

> "Torne la resne, si s'en va galopant
> A Hermenjart au coraje vaillant:
> 'Franche contesse, dist Aymeris li frans,
> Or sont entré Sarrazin en mal an.
> Mar issirent d'Espaigne.'"
>
> *Id.*, 769–773.

And as Aymeri fights with Corsolt it seems that he is constantly thinking of his wife (*Id.*, 1113–19). Later, when Aymeri is taken prisoner and is about to be burnt alive by the Saracens, it is again Ermengard who calls from the walls that she will surrender the city on her own responsibility, if her people be allowed to keep the Christian religion. When finally, at the end of the poem, Aymeri is killed by the outlandish *Saietaires* in a scene that seems like a foretaste of Ariosto, we are told that a year afterward Ermengard died also of sorrow.

Paulin Paris, in a delicate appreciation, has said of the wife of Girart de Roussillon: "Sa femme a, comme lui, changé plusieurs fois de nom; c'est tantôt Berte, tantôt Ermengarde, et tantôt Emmeline; mais toujours c'est une épouse courageuse, sage, dévouée, dont la mission est de cicatriser les plaies, de calmer les fureurs de son orgueilleux époux, et de le ramener à des sentiments de loiauté, de désintéressement et de piété."[1] It was, indeed, during the twenty-two years of penitence imposed upon him by the hermit that Girart found Berte to be the uncomplaining sharer of his miseries. Broken in spirit and spent physically he let himself be guided in his wanderings by her. When she hears of the price that Charles had put upon his head, it is Berte who assumes the direction of their affairs:

[1] *Hist. litt. de la France*, xxii, p. 305.

"Seiner dis la contesse quer me creaz
Eschiven les castels e les citaz
E toz les chevalers e les poestaz
Que la felnie es granz el cobeitaz
Car seiner vostre non car o caniaz
E el li respondet si com vos plaz."

Girart de Rossillon (Ox. MS.), 7605–10.

The whole scene of exile is vivid and natural, despite the visible influence of the lives of saints. When the poor Count, rising from his sick bed, realizes his misery and destitution, it is his wife who comforts him:

"E sa bone mullers lo cap li ders
'Car seiner laisse estar lonor que pers
Quar si mal cuelz en grat mellor conquers.
Pois li despont des saumes david tes vers
E contet lui de iop qui fun deu sers."

Id., 7664–68.

When the wretched couple in their poverty become the sport of lewd fellows who mock them, Berte courageously comes to the defense of her husband against these brazen calumniators:

"Seiner mercet por deu e por saint pere.
Trobet mei orfenine pauche bergere
E me prest a muller deus lo li mere
E pois me fes aprendre a costurere
Non sai plus gentil ome de lui o quere
Quel non est de ca mar diste ribere
Ni a un tan felun de male terre
Assa duce razon nol conquere."

Id., 7722–29.

These quotations will suffice to show the justice of Paulin Paris' estimate of Berte's character.[1]

In the poem of *Parise la Duchesse* the theme of *Berte aus grans piés* and of *Macaire* again recurs. It belongs to the Carolingian cycle only by courtesy, and after the fourth

[1] To these examples of conjugal devotion might be added that of Beatrix in *Hervis de Metz.*

verse there is no more question of Charlemagne. Our interest centres in Parise, the young wife accused of murdering the Duke's brother. She is apparently spared because she is pregnant (pp. 19, 22); but she is driven into exile from which she returns only after years. It may be permitted to note the delicate psychological treatment of this episode. When Raymond hears the accusation made against Parise he is furious and, almost another Othello, stays his hand from his right to murder her on the spot only because she is with child. Now, there is a traitor Milon who treacherously offers to defend Parise in a judicial combat. According to agreement with the traitor crew who are plotting Parise's discomfiture, he lets himself be defeated. But Raymond does not know he is a traitor, and he is so angry that Parise's guilt should thus be proven that he hangs Milon for not winning the trial by arms. Jealous, moreover, for his wife's innocence, even against the evidence, he burns the traitor bishop who asserts falsely that Parise has confessed her crime. The swift execution belongs to a by-gone age; but the inconsistency of Raymond is perfectly natural. He cannot bear to hear anyone speak evil of his wife. If she is guilty, and he believes she is, he reserves for himself the right to punish her. No other hand is worthy. Parise, for her part, is concerned only for the child yet unborn. Her pleas that she be spared until the child be born, and that Raymond then kill her, are at last heard and she is sent into exile. She begs her husband to remember:

> " 'Quele part que ge aille, que m'en remanra orez:
> De vos sera li anfes qui de moi sera nez.'"
>
> *Parise la Duchesse*, p. 22.

There is a beautiful devotion in the midnight scene of her departure from the castle, as she goes out into exile:

> "Et apres la mienuit issirent de l'ostel.
> La dame vit la tor o norri ot esté;

Dist à sez compaignos : 'Un petit m'atendez,
Tant que mon seignor aie véu et esgardé.'
'Dame, disent si home, merci por amor Dé!
Se li dus le savoit, n'an porron eschaper ;
Maintenant nos fera toz les mambres coper.'
Et respondi la dame : 'Il ne puet estre el.'
Ele se laise à terre de la mule coler,
Et trespassa la dame les chevaliers membrez,
Qui gisent ou palais es couches lez à lez,
Puis vint elle ou palais où li dus Raimons ert.
Tant a ploré li dus toz an fu agrevez ;
Par devant lui ardirent dui grant cirge alumé.
Atant e vos la dame au gent cors honoré ;
Elle ne l'ose mie esveillier ne boter ;
An la face lo baise coiement et soé,
Puis prist andeus ses ganz qui sont à or paré,
Après, leva sa main, si l'a de Deu seigné :
'Sire dus de Saint Gile, de Deu soiez sauvez!
Or somes moi et toi à doleur desevré,
Que jamais à ma vie des ieuz ne me verez!'
Devant l'uis de la chambre ne pot sor piez ester ;
Li cuers li est paumez, si s'en torne arier."

Id., pp. 23, 24.

In reading the *chansons de geste* one feels that as time went on the centre of interest shifted more and more from the married woman to the maid. We know that the Celtic romances and the Provençal *courtoise* poetry were popular in the North of France from the middle of the twelfth century, a date anterior to the composition of the greater number of the epic poems as we have them. It is natural, then, that many of these poems should have felt these two new influences, especially that of the romances of adventure, in the treatment of woman. How, then, account for the fact that many even of the twelfth and thirteenth century poets adhered to the old style? The explanation is that these poets intentionally maintain the conventional epic tradition by the subordination of woman to an unromantic rôle. The poems that represent woman as the companion of man, as his spouse, as his constant helper and adviser

even in military and political matters, rather than as a romantic object of diversion during his idle moments or as the end of adventurous quests,—these poems represent the persistence of the primitive feudal ideal of woman. By some poets, sticklers for this national tradition, the *chansons de geste* were evidently considered an improper place for the introduction of the heroine who dictated the conduct of the once proud warrior and who claimed his service. Such poets essentially assert that neither Provençal woman-worship nor Breton woman-service has any place in the vigorous songs of deeds which these poets were called to sing. This satisfactorily explains the survival of the warrior hero's popularity and the subordination of woman even in poems composed long after the Breton and Provençal influences were supreme in feudal society.

The poems now to be examined have, for the most part, felt the force of the new literary demands for a new sort of woman,—a passionate heroine who shall occupy in the narrative a place equal, if not superior, in importance to that of the hero. While adhering to the *cadre* of the epic and avoiding the domain of the *romans d'aventure*, the poets contrived to bring the young woman into prominence and to develop her rôle.

The second part of *Raoul de Cambrai*, beginning at *tirade* CCL, offers a striking example of this grafting on of a new style. In the first part, it will be remembered, Aalais and Heluïs were hardly more than incidental personages happily introduced as devoted to Raoul. The second part lands us *in medias res* with the passionate love of the daughter of Guerri for Bernier. Notice that it is his beauty and bravery that win her, without his even thinking of love. When he arrives as her father's guest, she says to herself:

> " 'Lie la dame qe isil aroit prise,
> Car molt a los de grant chevalerie!

Qi le tenroit tot nu soz sa cortine.
Miex li valroit qe nule rien qi vire.' "
Raoul de Cambrai, 5591–94.

She takes the initiative and lays plans at once to capture him. The scene no longer passes in the open air or in the great hall of the feudal castle, but in the privacy of the lady's boudoir. There is an air of intimate secrecy and intrigue. She sends her chamberlain to Bernier:

" ' Di li par moi salus et amistié,
Et q'en mes chambres ce vaigne esbanoier
Et as eschès et as tables joier.' "
Id., 5623–25.

Once in possession of Bernier she loses no time:

" Il n'ont or cure d'autres blés gaaignier.
La damoisele a parlé tout premier."
Id., 5678–79.

She does not hesitate to rehearse her charms:

" ' En non Dieu, sire, ains estes mes amis.
Pren moi a feme, frans chevalier eslis . . . .
Veés mon cors com est amanevis:
Mamele dure, blanc le col, cler le vis;
Et car me baise, frans chevalier gentis;
Si fai de moi trestot a ton devis.' "
Id., 5695–5702.

It is not necessary to insist upon the distance we have come from Aude and Heluïs!

To the same class of passionate young women belong Claresme in *Gaydon*, Galienne in *Garin de Montglane*,[1] Belissant in *Amis et Amiles*, Lusiane in *Aiol*, Floripas in *Fierabras*, Letise in *Anseïs de Carthage*, Rosamonde in *Elie de S. Gille*, and others. Of these Floripas, Rosamonde, together with the lovely Mirabel, will be more extensively treated in the chapter devoted to the Saracens. Though

[1] Vid. Gautier, *Epopées*, iv, p. 139.

there is little to distinguish them from the Christian women just referred to, yet they properly belong in another category. We shall see the tendency in the later poems was to introduce the Saracens rather as a romantic element, and it was thus that the Saracen princesses were brought into connection with the Christian knights.

Another instance of the grafting of a new style upon old matter is offered by Jean Bodel's *Chanson des Saisnes*. The romantic features are introduced well on in the poem, when the Christian army is encamped on the Rhine. The meeting of the French knights under Baudouin with the Saxon ladies accompanying Sibyle is the first part of a plot to ensnare the former. It is urged that the beauty of the Saxon women will lure the French knights across the river to their death. But the women do not take the plot very seriously, and welcome the chance to become acquainted with their opponents:

> " 'Dame, dist la roine, or somes bien an voie
> De veoir les François, se aucuns s'an cointoiẽ.
> Qui or a son ami, qu'ele ne le fauvoie;
> Mès sovant an sa tante se deduise et donoie:
> Que vaut biautez de dame, s'an jovant ne l'amploie?'
> 'Dame, dist Marsebile, qi joste li s'apoie,
> Bien ait ore maistresse qi si bien nos maistroie!'"
>
> *Chanson des Saisnes*, v. i, pp. 108, 109.

As the intrigue, all too successful, progresses, and Sibyle really gains the love of Baudouin, it is amusing to note that her waiting-maid Helissant in like manner ensnares Berart, the 'second-man.'

Another poem in which the two spirits exist side by side is *Anseïs de Carthage*. There are numerous female characters in this poem. During her father's absence to demand a wife for the young Anseïs, Letise arranges to anticipate the as yet unknown rival and lie with the king herself. Anseïs disdains her proffered love and Letise plots a ven-

geance worthy of such a passionate woman. Upon her father's return she accuses Anseïs of attempted rape. Ysoré espouses his daughter's cause and from that beginning dates a long conflict. Later Anseïs marries Gaudisse, as intended. After a battle he returns to the palace where the radiant Gaudisse awaits her lord and one of his vassals says:

> "'Sire rois, esgardes!
> En vo castel est li solaus leves.'
> Ot le li rois, si a ii. ris getes." [1]
>
> *Anseis von Karthago*, 7561–63.

In spite of the psychological interest which they sometimes present, it may be permitted to hurry over this type of forward women of whom a brief list has been already given. They are not attractive morally and could not have existed as a standard in any conceivable state of society. Their characters are interesting only as they show the imagination of the poets drawing away from the primitive type, elaborating the rôle of woman in modern fiction.

With Aude, Heluïs, Ermengard, Berte, Guibourc and Parise in mind, one must admit that the same qualities which we admire in woman to-day already in the twelfth century constituted her glory: beauty, love, constancy, intelligence and companionship. It is quite certain that by the thirteenth century these virtues in woman were held as high as they are to-day. The foregoing passages have shown how profoundly the literary presentation of woman changed between the eleventh and the fourteenth century. The contrast that exists, for example, between the first and second parts of *Raoul de Cambrai* or between the *Roland* and *Parise la Duchesse* reveals the growing interest in a psychological

[1] Cf. "De sa tres grant biauté fu toute enluminée
La chambre où nostre gent fu trestoute assemblée."
Doon de Maience, p. 239.

treatment of woman. She has changed from the incidental rough-hewn but deep-feeling woman of the early poems into a delicately refined creature, capable of elaborate literary treatment.

It would be a mistake to close this chapter without a glance at the reverse side of the medal. The bad women in the epic poetry are rare. There are two poems, however, in which these she-devils, these *traitors* bear an important rôle; and these two poems, regarded as psychological novels, happen to be among the best we have. It is undeniable that the artistic portrayal of the evil in human nature is impressive. *Berte aus grans piés* and *Amis et Amiles*, of all the poems we know, approach most closely in plot and psychological interest to the modern novel. They easily distance the greater number of monotonous modern variations of the eternal theme of alienated affections.

Passing over mythological hypotheses, which do not interest us here, and speaking from a literary point of view, *Berte aus grans piés* is Adenet le Roi's[1] artistic treatment of a well-known *motif*,—of how the wiles of a wicked but clever woman enable her to usurp the place of the timid, virtuous wife, and how the latter finally triumphs and regains her rights. By the artifice of the plot and the skilful handling of contrasted characters this poem indicates the last gasp of the national poetry on the point of turning into another *genre* of vaster possibilities: the novel.

Again, in *Amis et Amiles*, we have a character who is fascinating by her very villainy. Lubias is thoroughly cold, crafty and pitiless. She is the type of wife who is hopelessly incompatible with her husband. The contrast between this treatment and that of the same familiar *motif* in the satiric literature reveals the superiority of the former.

[1] Cf. the excellent pages of Paulin Paris on Adenet le Roi in *Hist. litt. de la France*, xx, pp. 701–706.

The author of our poem is, indeed, of no mean versatility. Now a Maupassant in the bed-room scene between Amile and Belissant (662–722), he is as religious at the close as the author of the *Saint Alexis* and apparently quite as sincere (3472–3504). The poem has for its theme the beauty of self-sacrifice, a lesson which the story of Lubias' villainy serves to make more effective by contrast. What is to be insisted upon is this constant preoccupation of the poet with this matter of eternal interest in French literature: the intimate relations of men and women. This poem should be studied as presenting an early chapter in the evolution of social literature in France.

The slanders upon woman so common in the popular literature of the Middle Age are rarely met with in the epic poems. These poems breathe a nobler spirit. They are free from the petty annoyances of *bourgeois* life. They breathe a purer air, where woman as a rule occupies a worthy place. An occasional concession is made in the later poems to that settled mediæval conviction that woman is to blame for all the evil in the world. But such concessions are out of spirit with the context and are generally quoted as a proverb or with some saving clause:

> " 'Voir dist, ki dist icheste prophesie:
> Par feme esmuet sovent grans deablie."
>
> *Anseïs von Karthago*, 9021–22.

> "Quar de famme ne sera vuil homme amé,
> Qui ne la peut bien servir à son gré;
> Vuil hom fredist quant il est an aé,
> Et geune famme pour dire verité
> Soupvent eschauffe, telle est sa qualité,
> Qui sont à paine els deux à ung gré."
>
> *Aquin*, 915–920.

> "Souvent voit on grant mal par fame alever. . . .
> Maint preudomme ai véu à mal par fame aler."
>
> *Fierabras*, p. 63.

"Tant par est fox qui mainte fame croit
Et qui li dist noient de son consoil.
Or sai je bien, Salemons se dist voir:
En set milliers n'en a quatre non trois
De bien parfaites, qui croire les voldroit."
Amis et Amiles, 1218–22.

"Plus soit honis mâles, qui croit famele
Que les traitres, qui hom en cort apele!"
Fouque de Candie, p. 29.

It will be felt that such expressions do not harmonize with the spirit of the *chansons de geste* nor with the society for which they were originally composed.

Three conclusions may be drawn from what has preceded: I. The earliest poems, and those that imitate them, reflect a natural and perfectly attainable ideal of woman as maid, wife and mother, the equal and companion of man. But since her existence is common-place and monotonous she rarely emerges from obscurity in poems intended for an audience whose main interest was fighting.

II. The poems composed as we have them after the middle of the twelfth century reflect, but do not totally appropriate, the spirit of the Celtic romances. Under the influence of the latter, the later epic poems introduce woman for her own sake, indeed, but never give her the first place in the story nor make her the motive force of the action.

III. Finally, here and there crops out as an excrescence the theory of woman's moral inferiority to man. Here she is infinitely crafty, and brutish in her passions, the cause of man's first disobedience. We do not believe that an early aristocratic feudal audience would have any sympathy for this attitude toward woman. It was only when the *bourgeoisie* began to compose poems and to listen to them in the public squares, that this feature of the *bourgeois* philosophy finds expression.

In no period of French literature,—neither in the *romans*

d'aventure, nor in the society literature of the *grand siècle*, nor in the emancipated treatment of the modern novelists,—is woman more attractively and more truthfully, albeit often naïvely, portrayed than in the *chansons de geste*. Here the respectful but rough Teutonic conception is agreeably tempered by the Celtic chivalric conception. It is proper, then, to speak of the epic type of woman. It is a type distinct from the contemporary romantic, pastoral, and satiric types. Affected especially by the romantic presentation of woman in the romances of adventure, as will be seen in the chapter upon the Saracen women, the epic poems nevertheless reflect a type of woman which is more natural, more many-sided, less exaggerated in her traits than is the case in any of the contemporary *genres*.

As for the artistic treatment of woman, we think it much more advanced than others have held. One must not be misled by conventional descriptions of beauty. There was but one type of feminine beauty and the poets had not enough ingenuity to vary the details to any extent. Gaston Paris, speaking of Renier's *Il tipo estetico della donna nel medio evo*, writes: "Le conventionalisme pur de presque toutes les descriptions de beauté féminine du moyen âge y est parfaitement mis en lumière, et c'est un trait qui a son importance pour l'appréciation intellectuelle artistique et morale de cette époque."[1] But this conventionalism is only on the outside. Considering that we are dealing with an essentially unimaginative form of poetry, the examples we have quoted surely offer a considerable variety of treatment, and show the *trouvères* seeking to express the truth about woman as they saw her and as they wished her to be. The coloring given to woman in a given poem depends upon the period and the *milieu* for which it was composed. But

[1] *Romania*, xiv, p. 316.

an accurate observation, a knowledge of woman's heart, and an attempt to analyse her motives as a social creature, are already noticeable, and bind these poems closely to later French literature by the very preoccupation with the relation of the sexes.

NOTE.—Only twice, in *Gui de Bourgogne* and in the *Chanson des Saisnes*, have we found women in the train of the Christian armies. Only the author of the *Pseudo-Turpin* was apparently thinking of lewd camp-followers, where he explains the Christians' defeat (cap. XXI).

BOURGEOIS AND *VILAIN*.

The characters treated thus far have all belonged to the upper classes of society. The king, the great vassals, the young knights, the noble ladies, the Saracen princesses,—these are the personages who played the leading part in the French epic poetry. This was natural; for this poetry was originally intended for the upper classes, and we assume the *dramatis personæ* to have accurately mirrored forth the sentiments of the audience. It has been pointed out by M. Rajna that some of the great seigneurial families of the North of Italy even flattered themselves that they were descended from the very heroes who aided Charlemagne against the Saracens.[1] There is an echo of this pride of lineage in *La Chanson d'Antioche* where, while quarreling for supremacy at the capture of Antioch, Godefroi de Bouillon boasts himself to be *del lignage Charlon* and the Duc de Normandie replies: *Dont ne sui-je del lin Renart le fil Aimon?*[2] In assisting at the recital of a *chanson de geste*, then, one might listen in some sense to a chapter of family history. It was natural that the chief personages of such a body of poetry should be of noble, if not of royal, birth.

[1] Vid. Pio Rajna, *Le fonti dell' Orlando Furioso*, 2nd ed., Florence, 1900, pp. 13, 14.

[2] *La Chanson d'Antioche*, v. ii, p. 178.

But beneath these upper classes and separated from them by many a round on the social ladder, lived and toiled the working classes in varying degrees of dependence. The peasants of Wace's day say:

> "Nus sumes homes cum il sunt;
> Tex membres avum cum il unt."
> *Roman de Rou* (ed. Pluquet), 6027–28.

It is known how from humble beginnings a *bourgeoisie* developed, how with royal favor it became a great political and social power, how it lifted up its head and overthrew the Bourbons. The narrative of this evolution is one of the most important chapters in the annals of France.

We are to consider now the rôle of the *bourgeois* and the appearance of his ideals in the epic poems. If our thesis be true, that the epic poetry reflects accurately the contemporary social evolution, we shall find in literature as in history the lower classes emerging from obscurity.

It is of something more, however, than the occasional appearance of the *bourgeois* and *vilain* in the epic poems that we must speak. The *bourgeois* or *vilain* hero is, indeed, sometimes introduced in good faith for his own worth; but more often as a contrast, as a conscious artistic device of the *trouvère* to enhance the interest of his poem. Félix Brun, speaking of the treatment accorded to the *vilain* in the *chansons de geste*, says: "Elles n'ont pas toujours mal parlé des vilains. Elles leur ont même donné parfois, peutêtre pour amener un curieux contraste, une place qui n'est pas sans importance; elles les ont revêtus de couleurs sympathiques."[1] In some of these characters we shall find the grotesque element, which would raise a laugh even in a refined audience, to be the dominant trait. Serious and

[1] Félix Brun, *La vie privée des paysans au moyen âge et sous l'ancien régime*, p. 56.

solemn as the epic poetry conventionally remains, occasional bursts of fun are by no means rare in the later poems. Though a touch of humor may be given to the narrative by any grim warrior or romantic maiden, it is mainly these heroes of low degree who are responsible for the intrusion of the *esprit gaulois* upon the stately gravity of the French epic. To borrow a phrase from Mr. Chandler's *Romances of Roguery*, we should call such a jolly fellow as Galopin, Rainouart and Robastre the *anti-hero*, charged with presenting a contrast to his nobler prototype and, at the same time, answering the demands of a more democratic public.

We find the *bourgeois* element as a social class already in the *Roland*. It is a mere mention, in passing, of the townspeople of Saragossa:

> " Tant chevalchierent qu'en Sarraguce sunt,
> Passent x. portes, traversent iiii. punz,
> Tutes les rues, ù li burgeis estunt.
> Cum il aproisment en la citet amunt,
> Vers le palais oïrent grant fremur."
>
> *Roland*, 2689–93.

This is the early feudal conception: the townspeople huddled in the narrow streets of the lower town, within the enclosure of the fortifications, but living apart from the fighting-men who kept to the citadel, the *citet amunt*. This bare mention of the *bourgeois* element in a town is to be noted chiefly for its complete failure to serve as an artistic back-ground. It never occurred to the *trouvère* of the *Roland* to narrate what the *bourgeois* of Saragossa were doing at the time, and how they received the Christian messengers. Indeed, such a description of a crowd of common people, as we soon find in *Aiol*, would have had no interest for this audience.

Not till the end of the twelfth century does the *bourgeoisie* appear in all its glory as a part of the artistic setting of the poem. The heroes still move about on a higher plane, but

the *bourgeoisie* at times receives all the attention. For example, the spirit of raillery and jest has taken complete possession of the poet in the two famous scenes in *Aiol* where the hero with his wretched old-fashioned accoutrement is jeered at and mocked by the people of Poitiers and of Orléans. At Poitiers Aiol and his horse Marchegai, after arousing the wonder and curiosity of people along the streets, are assailed by a drunken man:

"E vous i. lecheor corant venu:
D'un celier ist tous ivres, qu'il ot beu,
Et ot jué as deis, s'ot tout perdu;
Corant vint a Aiol, si l'arestut,
Par le frain le sacha par grant vertu.
'Maistre, dist li lechieres, estes venus?
Qu'avés tant demoré al boin eur?
Mi compaignon vos beent, tout ont perdu.
Cis chevaus est moult maigres et confondus:
Il estera anqui al vin beu,
Et cele lance roide et cis escus.
Qui vous dona che frain a or batu?
Les resnes en sont routes, mais molt boins fu.'"

Aiol, 911–923.

Marchegai, as well as Aiol, resents this familiarity so common in drunken men, and kills the intruder with a well-directed kick. The bystanders are delighted with this, and incite Aiol to further violence by comparing Marchegai with one of King Arthur's horses, and Aiol's antiquated arms with those of *dant Esau, quives qui par eage c. ans u plus.* Many and varied are the coarse jests which they hurl at the poor knight and his jaded mount. The whole scene should be read to realize the importance of the rôle played by the citizens. Poitiers seems well furnished with men who love good cheer not wisely but too well. Another scene (vv. 1021–33) with a drunken man follows close upon that already quoted. Here, again, Marchegai quiets the *glouton* without Aiol soiling his hands in the matter. The hero's

gentle courtesy is everywhere effectively contrasted with the vulgarity of these lewd fellows. At last Aiol finds a kind host who cares for him and apologizes for the rudeness of his fellow-townsmen:

> "'François sont orgellous desmurés.
> Et si sont coustumier de lait parler:[1]
> Laidengier vos vauront et ranproner.'"
>
> *Id.*, 1157–59.

We follow Aiol to Orléans where, in the market-place, a similar scene is described:

> "Aiols li fieus Elie a tant alé
> Qu'al grant marchiet d'Orliens en est entrés:
> Borgois et macheclier l'ont molt gabé,
> Des pomons de lor vakes l'ont il rué:
> 'Voiéns, compere Pieres, che dist Eldrés,
> E Dieus! cis avoit ore trop demoré!
> S'il ore avoit ja fors l'estor trové
> Il ne donroit mais trieves devant Noel;
> Car fust chi Hageneus li enivrés
> Et Hersent, sa mollier al ventre lé!
> Toutes gens set lait dire et reprover;
> Chele ne voit nul home par chi passer
> Que maintenant ne sache un gab doner;
> S'ele avoit son coutel grant acheré
> Son ronchi li aroit ja escoué,
> Dont seroit il plus biaus a amener.'"
>
> *Id.*, 2579–94.

The above-mentioned Hersent is not slow to appear. Note the *trouvère's* slur at the *bourgeoisie parvenue:*

> "Atant evos Hersent al ventre grant;
> Ch'ert une pautoniere molt mesdisant,
> Feme a un macheclier d'Orliens le grant:
> Né furent de Borgonge la (de) devant;
> Quant vinrent a Orliens la chité grant,
> Ni aporterent il, mien ensiant,
> De tous avoirs en tere v. sous vaillant;
> Ains estoient kaitif et mendiant,

[1] Cf. *Le Français, né malin* of Boileau (*Art Poétique*, ii, 182).

Dolant et mort de fain et pain querant :
Mais par lor esparenge fissent il tant
Que xx. sous de deniers vont espargnant,
A monte et a usure si vont prestant :
Ainc que fuissent passé plus de v. ans
Les vont si li diable montepliant
Ces xx. sous de deniers qu'il vont prestant,
Un si trés grant avoir vont amassant
Que les ii. pars d'Orliens vont engagant,
Fours, molins et rechès vont acatant
Et vont tous les frans homes desiretant.
Quant il furent venu en l'avoir grant
Qu'il sont venu a auques de droit niant,
Lors ceullent un orgeul de maintenant,
Ne laisoient durer home vivant."

Id., 2656–78.

After she has had her jest like the others, Aiol gets even with her thus :

" 'Dame, dist (li) li valès, laisieme atant :
Vous m'avés bien gabé, s'en sui dolant ;
Mais (i)che me va auques reconfortant
Que vous avés cel cors mal avenant :
Hideuse estes et laide et mal puant,
Et le vostre serviche pas ne demanc.
Molt vous aiment ches mousques par Dé le grant,
Car vos estes lor mere, mien ensiant :
Entor vos trevent merde, j'en sai itant,
Que a molt grans tropiaus vos vont sivant.' "

Id., 2704–13.

Hersent is discomfited by being answered in kind, and makes her escape through the jeering crowd. Thus, even our hero Aiol had been infected by his surroundings. His conventional knightly behavior gave place to the vulgarity of the natural man.

This contrast of the knight and the *bourgeois* is again brought out in *Les Enfances Vivien*, a thirteenth century poem. Vivien, a captive in Spain at the age of seven, was bought by a merchant's wife and kindly treated by her. She presents him to her husband, from whom she has long

been separated, as her son, and such the husband believes him to be. They plan a mercantile career for Vivien when he shall be old enough to assist them at the great fairs.[1] But the knight's son soon speaks out:

> "'Dist W. de folie paroles
> De marchandise ne donroie je i. denier
> Mais i. destrier me faites amener
> Et ii. brakes me faites delivrer
> i. espervier me faites aporter
> Par ces montaignes m'en irai deporter
> Prendrai de quailles et des pertris asés.'"
> *Les Enfances Vivien* (MS. de Boulogne), 855–861.

As his initial commercial transaction Vivien betrays his unpractical turn by paying one hundred *deniers* for a crippled old horse. Here the intentional contrast is between the careful money-hoarding merchant and the open-handed young knight.[2] The *bourgeois* is properly scandalized at hearing his supposed son talk about laying siege to cities and castles, hiring *soudoiers* and spending money recklessly for arms. He tries to persuade Vivien to be sensible and become his successor:

> "'Je suis mais viex et kanus et ferrant
> Si me deuses reposer sor mon banc.'"
> *Id.*, 1173–74.

Vivien calls such business usury and continues to spend money confided to him upon dogs and *esperviers*. Finally, put in charge of a convoy of merchants bound to a distant fair, he sells all the goods, arms his followers, and attacks the caravan of a Saracen merchant whose plunder he sends back to the delighted Godefroi. The rest of the poem assumes the character of a *chanson de geste*. We are glad to

[1] Cf. *Les Narbonnais*, 301 f. The *borjois riches* say:

> "'Marcheant somes, qui ne finom d'errer
> Par plussors terres por avoir conquester.'"

[2] Cf. *Hervis de Mes*, 324 f., for an identical situation.

hear that, when it is in his power, Vivien rewards the old merchant couple for all the trouble he had caused them.

Parise la Duchesse gives us a picture of the *bourgeoisie* under arms at the siege of Cologne:

> "Par de desus la vile sont issuz li archier,
> As murs et as escrimes sont li arbelestier;
> Devant la maitre porte sont li borjois à pié,
> Qui portent bones armes et jusarmes d'acier,
> Et grant targes raondes, fandues de carter."
>
> *Parise la Duchesse*, p. 57.

One of the principal figures in this scene is *Richiers li maires*! The rôles have changed since the *Roland*, but they are still fighting.

Hugues Capet, of the fourteenth century, represents the literary triumph of the *bourgeois* spirit in our *genre*. It is not necessary to give a *résumé* of this poem in which the hero, the son of a Parisian butcher's daughter, breaks the hearts of all the ladies, marries the daughter of King Louis, and finally becomes king of France. No more satisfactory example of new matter put into an old mould could be desired than this pseudo-*chanson de geste*. Of one of the numerous bastard sons of Hugh we shall speak later. More important to remark is the *bourgeois* spirit personified in Hugh's rich uncle Simon the butcher. It is the sordid spirit of Philistinism in this uncle which is contrasted with the more chivalric conception of Hugh, whose father, indeed, was a knight. The uncle wants his nephew to be his apprentice and successor:

> "'Or demorez chéens, sy vous aprenderon
> A tuer ung pourchiel, ou buef, ou i. mouton,
> Et s'en serez marquans, waingnerez à ffoison.
> Se trez bien vous portez, quanquez vaillant avon
> Arez aprez me mort; je n'ay oir se vous non.'
> 'Biaulz onclez, ce dist Huez, j'ai aultre opinion.'"
>
> *Hugues Capet*, pp. 5, 6.

Seeing that he can do nothing to convert the roving tendencies of his nephew:

"Tout pensis, sans mot dire, s'assist sur i. tonniel.
Quant assez ot pensé, s'alla à son huchiel,
iic florins a pris en sen plus grant monchiel,
A Huon lez donna en ung petit saquel."

Id., p. 7.

What a picture this is of the careful hoarding Parisian *bourgeois*! Hugh then begins a tour of France, during which his principal occupation is the undoing of all the *damoisellez* and *pucellez* along his route. For he had taken his motto from Ovid:

"'Que ly ons doit avoir des amiez pluseurs.
Je lairay ceste cy, s'en refferay ailleurs.'"

Id., p. 10.

While Hugh is away, business goes well with the butcher, and on Hugh's return the uncle makes new propositions:

"'J'ay, puis que ne vo vy, gaingnié si largement
Qu'à Paris n'a bourgois, biaus niez, certainement,
Qui ait autant de meublez, de rentez ne d'argent.'"

Id., p. 23.

Hugh shall have money enough to live in grand style, and moreover:

"'Se vous querons aussy ung biau mariement.'"

Hugh is willing enough to do all but marry:

"'Je demoray o vous car mez cuers s'y assent;
Mais de moy marier n'ai ge mie tallent,
Si ce n'est à tel dame, sachiez certainnement
Dont onneur et riquesse me viegne hautement,
Car à lui marier a grant peril souvent:
Il y quiet jallousie ou pire argüement....
Dont di ge que d'amours servir tout ligement
Vienent grace et éurs, car, tant ly hons se prent
De amer, il doit estre de bel esbatement.
Riens ne doit esparnier, ains doit songneusement

Rouver mercy partout où ces cuers ly aprent.
Se ly une reffuse, ly autre s'y assent.
En tel estat veul je user le mien jouvent,
Car c'est drois paradis à homme qui s'entent.' ''

Id., pp. 23, 24.

We may imagine how Chrétien de Troyes and Jean de Meun respectively would have been variously affected by this frank expression of material love. But the *bourgeois* Simon was not scandalized by these ideas of his progressive nephew. He was rather proud of this emancipated upstart:

"Ly bourgois souffisant doucement en rioit;
Hue retint o lui, qui grant estat menoit."

Id., p. 24.

The prominence of the *bourgeoisie* as a political factor is interesting to notice in this poem. When it is a question of giving her daughter in marriage, the Queen Blancheflor says that the consent of the Peers of France is not sufficient; she wishes the expression of *bourgeois* opinion as well:

"'Et ly bourgeois oussy de che roiaulme chà;
Me fille à leur volloir du tout obéyra.' "

Id., p. 27.

Even the princes who favor the enterprise of the Count Savari bow before the *franc bourgois de ceste cité*. The battle fought against the Parisians by the allied princes is a combat between the chivalric nobility on one side, and the allied monarchy and *bourgeoisie* on the other. At first, the leader of the royal forces disdains the support of his *bourgeois* troops:

"'Mais entre vous, bourgois au fourré capperon,
Estez devant voz huis trop noble campion,
Et cant vient en bataille, n'i vallez i. bouton.' "

Id., p. 48.

But soon afterward, his life having been saved by Hugh and his *bourgeois* troops, the *connêtable* begs pardon. Hugh says:

"'Connetablez, par Dieu de paradis,
Mestier avez éu dez bourgois de Paris,
De cellui proprement qui de vous fu laidis!
Ly hons n'est mie saigez de blamer sez amis.'"

Id., p. 52.

And the *connêtable* replies:

"'Frans vassaus postaïs,
Ne say c'estez bourgois, du cuer estez gentis,
Et de tous conbatans estez superlatis . . . .
Pardon vous en requier, car j'aroie mespris.'"

Id., p. 52.

It is Hugh who deals the great blows in this fight and who is the strength of the royal forces. The *connêtable* fully recognizes his prowess (p. 55), and in giving an account to the queen, it is in these words that he speaks of Hugh:

"'J'ay moult oy lower Rolant et Olivier,
Et Guillame, vo frere, et le danois Ogier;
Mais je croy que cil iiii. que m'oés prononchier,
Ne Judas Maquabeus, ne Alixandre le fier,[1]
Ne peurent tant de bien en yaus amanagier
Qu'à cestui se péussent de proesche apairier.'"

Id., p. 58.

More brave than Roland and Oliver, than Ogier and Judas Maccabeus, worthy to marry the king's daughter (p. 55)! For what greater triumph could the butcher's nephew wish? The spirit of social equality in this poem is epitomized in the words of the queen's brother:

"'Car certez il vault bien qu'il ait i. tel destin,
Car il est biaulz et bons, et s'il n'est de hault lin,
Au vrai considerer, et tout pauvre meschin

[1] For these heroes as types of chivalry cf. Paul Meyer in *Bull. annuaire de la Société des anciens textes français*, 1883, pp. 45–54.

Sont tout estrait d'Adam et Bilart et Justin ;
Mais orguelz nous aprent à dire faulz latin.' "

Id., p. 126.

We have had to do thus far with the population of the towns, and we have seen how the *bourgeoisie* took hold of the epic poems during the period which elapsed between the *Roland* and *Hugues Capet*. More rarely do the poems speak of the rural population. The peasant rarely appears, though never with scorn or disdain, in the poems of the *trouvère*. *Li Charrois de Nymes* offers a scene of a jovial character, in which a countryman and his children are returning home from the town with a load of salt. The thrifty peasant with his ox-cart is still to-day a familiar sight on the high-roads of the *Midi:*

" Vient de Saint Gile où il ot conversé,
A iiii. bués que il ot conquesté,
Et iii. anfanz que il ot engendré.
De ce s'apensi li vilains que senez,
Que sel est chier el règne dont fu nez.
Desor son char a un tonel levé,
Si l'ot empli et tot rasé de sel.
Les iii. enfanz que il ot engendrez
Jeuent et rient et tienent pain assez :
A la billete jeuent desus le sel.
François s'en rient, que feroient-il el?"

Li Charrois de Nymes, 877–887.

The incessant wars must have frequently reduced the country population to a state of intense suffering, to which was added misery induced by over-taxation. Their destitute condition is touched upon with a sympathetic hand in the following passages: *Li Charrois de Nymes*, 570–580; *Mort Garin*, p. 139; *Berte aus grans piés*, 1758 f.; *Roman de Rou*, 5975 f.

It remains to speak under this heading of the heroes of low degree, of those who rose from the ranks to an equality with the old-time heroes. Just how far this literary evolu-

tion was a mirror of the actual state of feudal society is not easy to determine. The poets, addressing themselves to an aristocratic audience, certainly often deprecate the raising of low-born men above their station to places of responsibility (cf. *Girart de Rossillon*, 940–942 in *Rom. Studien, Couronnement de Louis*, 204–207). On the other hand, Paulin Paris cites the following interesting passage from *Aspremont* which argues eloquently for the democratic spirit of the times. It is Charles himself who is speaking:

> " 'Chevalier ert qui estre le voudra;
> Chascuns de ceus qui les armes penra,
> Se Dex me maine iluec où je fui jà
> Il aura terre, dont chevaliers sera!' . . .
> Chevaliers fist de gent de maint lignage;
> Por qu'il i sache proesce et vasselage,
> Auques n'i ot aconté nul parage;
> Se il est serf, quites ert de servage,
> Ne donra mais, en trestot son eage,
> Ne por sa terre, ne tréu ne pasage."
>
> *Aspremont* (Summary in *Hist. litt. de la France*, v. xxii, pp. 300–318).

Everything indicates that under the late feudal system a man could raise himself socially by extraordinary talents or by rendering a signal service to those to whom he was nominally subject. Warnings against such presumption would naturally be uttered by those jealous of social and political encroachment; but these warnings did not stem the tide of advance of the *people* into prominence.

We maintain, however, that the introduction of these heroes of the middle and lower classes was due to something more than to social and political encroachment from below. In many cases the *trouvères* were conscious literary artists and had a clear conception of how to obtain an artistic effect. It is incredible that it should have been otherwise in a *genre* which reigned supreme for over a century and then shared

the popularity of the *romans d'aventure* for a century and a half more. To keep abreast of popular demands in a period of changing taste, innovations were necessary. There is every reason to believe that the introduction of these vulgar heroes dates from an early period, the purpose being to vary the monotony of the recital and to effect a contrast with the eternally recurring type of feudal and chivalric hero. That this innovation was fostered by the contemporary rise of the *bourgeoisie* into prominence is certain. But it seems equally certain that this type of the popular hero possessed from the outset of our period a literary value which the *trouvères* exploited more and more as time went on. There need be no surprise at finding, in the quotations that follow, the heroic and the burlesque side by side. For, as Guessard has said: "Le principe de la séparation des genres, si fort contesté de nos jours, était, selon toute apparence, inconnue du moyen âge, et lorsqu'il était appliqué, c'était pour ainsi dire, par la force des choses."[1] At an early date in the French epic literature there was a modest revolt against the perfect hero, whether epic or romantic. The changing public was doubtless gratified with an occasional Galopin, Raynouart or Robastre, because these figures, more real themselves, are the incarnation of the real and the practical,—the expression of the Sancho Panza there is in every man who would, in his best moments, be a Don Quixote.

The first sign of humor in the grim poem of *Garin et Begon* is presented by Menuel Galopin, whose very name puts him without the pale of heroism. It is Hervi who finds this pot-house cousin of Begon:

> "Iluec trouva Menuel Galopin
> Les le tonnel, en sa main trois dés tint
> Et trois putains, tels estoient ses délis;

[1] Vid. Préface of *Aliscans*, p. lxi.

Quatre ribaus ont les mustiaus rostis.
Hervis le voit, si l'a à raison mis :
'Et Diex te saut! Menuel Galopin!'
Et il respont : 'Diex bénéie ti!
Venez séoir et si getez au vin.'
Et dit Hervis : 'Onques por ce n'i vins ;
Begues vous mande, vostre germains cousins,
Vos parens est, ne li devez faillir.'
Dist Menués : 'Onques ne m'apartint,
Je n'ai mestier de si riche voisin ;
Mieus aims taverne et le soulas dou vin,
Ces demisieles que vous véez par ci,
Que je ne fais duchés à maintenir.'"
Li Romans de Garin le Loherain, vol. ii, pp. 99, 100.

It is only with the greatest trouble that Hervi can rouse this reprobate, whose figure would be sympathetic and familiar to even a feudal audience.

When the bastard sons of Hugh Capet meet by chance in the tavern at Senlis, they fall to discussing the reception which their father will give them. One of them predicts that each will receive a comfortable berth and reserves for himself that of *boutillier :*

"'Je ly demanderay cez clez de sen cellier,
Car c'est trez bon office que d'estre boutillier.'"
Hugues Capet, p. 101.

When they arrive at Paris, one of the brothers, more practical, suggests the advisability of attending to the inner man before embarking on any other enterprises :

"'Alons nous desjuner par amour tout devant,
Car sachiez que ly cuers me va de fain faillant,
Et je n'ay mie apris certez à juner tant.
Il n'est si bon' armeure que de ce vin friant
Et de cez patez là qui vont souez flairant.
Allez où il vous plaist, car, par Saint Guineman,
Ains seray desjunez que voise plus avant ;
Car qui aroit vestu lez armez roy Priant
Et s'éuist fain et soif, ne vauroit il ung gant. . . .
Signeurs, ce dist Richiers, par le Verge absollue,

Une deffaute au cuer m'est maintenant venue
Qu'il convient vrayement que je boive et menjue.
J'oy grant presse laiens, le vendenge y est drue ;
On se doit desjuner à premiere venue.' ''

Id., p. 103.

The same contrast of the heroic and practical is amusingly illustrated in *Aspremont*, where the young Roland and his boy-companions beg the *portier* to let them out of Laon to join the Christian army as it marches past. The *portier* takes no interest in their proposals, for he is satisfied with his own uneventful existence :

'' 'Tassiez vous, losengier,
Je n'ai que faire que soie chevaliers,
Car on i boute moult laidement et fiert ;
Je aim moult miels caiens le sommillier ;
Fors vous garder, n'ai soing d'autre mestier,
Car l'arcevesque m'en dona bon loier.
N'en isterez, laissiez vostre plaidier.
Alez deduire laiens en cel vergier,
De vos faucons pensez d'aplenoier.' ''

Aspremont in *Hist. litt. de la France*, v. xxii, pp. 300–318.

It is not surprising after this self-satisfied declaration that the *portier* falls a victim to the blows of these ambitious young knights. We may recognize in the scene the two philosophies, that of the ideal, and that of the material.

There are, however, two popular heroes, whose operations are not confined to a single scene, but who share the honors of an entire poem : Rainouart and Robastre. It is impossible to relate here all the achievements of these grotesque creatures who came to jostle such heroes as Guillaume d'Orange and Gaufrey in the popular interest. Just enough will be said to indicate their complexion and their artistic value.

Rainouart,[1] who first appears in *Aliscans* at verse 3140,

[1] For an extended analysis of his rôle, vid. Gautier, *Epopées*, iv, devoted to the *geste de Guillaume*.

has been bought by Louis of some merchants. Thus, he was only a Saracen captive and served in the royal kitchen as cook's boy. His gigantic proportions and unconventional manners at once distinguish him. He devours the king's dinner without ceremony, punishes summarily the cooks who worry him, and is, in short, an *enfant terrible*. From the moment that Rainouart sees Guillaume at the court, he is fascinated by this noble man. From this time begins, though slowly, his moral awakening. He begs to join Guillaume's expedition against the Saracens. He gets drunk, however, on the eve of the departure, and has to follow as best he can armed only with his *tinel*,[1] the conventional weapon of this type of hero. Having rejoined the army, he is unmanageable for all save Guillaume and his niece Aelis. He is inseparable from his *tinel* and rejoices in his self-confidence. One night when he is drunk again, they jestingly tell him that he should go with them to Aliscans. His confident answer, with the tenacity of a drunken man for one idea, is perfect:

> "'Par foi molt le desir;
> Et moi et aus laissiés moi convenir,
> Mais ke mon tinel aie.'"
>
> *Aliscans*, 4324–26.

Drunk again the night before the army leaves Orange, Rainouart forgets his *tinel*. It has to be fetched for him in a cart; once again in possession of it, he is content:

> "En la quisine va Rainouars couchier
> Joste le fu, dalés i. grant brasier.
> De son tinel a fait son oreillier;
> Adont s'en dort à aise."
>
> *Id.*, 4750–53.

His moral aspect changes, as he moves now in better society.

[1] Such a club, variously called *tinel*, *massue*, *cuignie* is the conventional weapon of the *vilain* in mediaeval court poetry.

In defeat he compels the coward leaders to return to the battle. When the French are hard pressed, it is he who is the strength of the Christian forces:

"Mien ensientre, n'en peust i. escaper
Se Diex ne fust et Rainouars li ber,
Ki en fist grant machacle."

Id., 5687–89.

The height of fun is reached when Rainouart tries to mount a horse. One can imagine how this description would amuse an audience of people who spent much of their time in the saddle:

"Del chevaucher n'estoit pas costumiere,
De la cuisine connoist mielz la fumiere.
Quant du monter, ainz n'i quist estriere,
Saut en la sele tot ce devant deriere,
Devers la queue a tornée sa chiere.
Et li chevas s'en fuit comme levriere
Tot contreval, parmi une bruiere."

Id., 6154–60.

After a temporary rupture with Guillaume when he thinks he has been insulted, Rainouart returns to Orange where he is recognized as the brother of Guibourc, sometime the Saracen princess Orable. He still prefers the kitchen and stables to the great hall, *car forment li anoie.* When Guillaume wishes to baptize him and indulges in quite a sermon upon the subject, Rainouart raises a laugh by exclaiming:

"'Sire Guillames qui savés de sermon,
Vous déusiés avoir un pelichon
Lonc traïnant desci ke au talon,
Et puis le froc, el chief le caperon,
Les grandes botes forrées environ,
Et le chief rés et corouné en son,
Et sesisiés tous dis sor un leson,
En cel moustier fesisiés orison,
Et éusiés à mangier à fuison
Blans pois au lart, formage de saison,
A la foïe pitance de poison.'"

Id., 7885–95.

When he is baptized it takes eleven men to lift him in and out of the font. Then he is knighted and marries Aelis, the king's daughter. Thus, in mere outline, we have assisted at the moral and social uplift of this brute of a kitchen-boy to high honors, fit to be placed with Guillaume and Godfrey in Dante's Paradise (*Par.*, XVIII, 46).[1]

This second part of *Aliscans* presents only a marked case of this spirit of fun entering the serious heroic poems. Many less conspicuous examples of the same tendency are noticeable in the later poems. Guessard points out rightly that the solemn tone of the *Roland* is an almost unique exception to the generality of the poems, which introduce comic features into the epic material.[2] Our own idea for *Aliscans*, as for the whole body of the epic poems, is that the purity of the heroic spirit originally native to such poetry was early contaminated by this laughter-provoking *esprit gaulois*. The poems as we have them do not represent the original spirit of heroic poetry. All show the mark of the later age in which the extant versions were invented or made over. The comic and grotesque element, though foreign to the primitive spirit of the French epic, is a common adjunct of it in the poems as they stand to-day.

Less interesting than Rainouart, because less natural, is Robastre, who figures in the *geste* of Doon de Maience. He is to be found in *Doon de Maience*, in *Gaufrey*, and in *Garin de Montglane*. He is introduced well on in the narrative of the first of these poems as a great, honest, merry fellow, a follower of Garin's who must have his own way, and who puts himself at the services of the Christians against the pagan *Danois*. He is at once less interesting to us because

[1] Two late poems, *Loquifer* and *Moniage Rainouart*, continue the story of Rainouart in comic vein. Cf. G. Paris, *Litt. du moyen âge*, 2nd ed., pp. 68, 69.

[2] Vid. Préface of *Aliscans*, pp. lxi f.

born in unnatural circumstances.[1] Hence, his prodigious deeds savor rather of *féerie* than of the comic. He is as independent and confident with his *cuignie* as is Rainouart with his *tinel* (*Doon de Maience*, p. 248). In *Gaufrey* we are warned at the outset that this Robastre is to be one of the central figures. After outlining the subject of the poem, how the Saracen king Gloriant harassed Doon and Garin, the poet adds:

> "Et si comme Robastre en prist puis vengement,
> Et comme il ochist puis le fort roi Gloriant."
>
> *Gaufrey*, p. 9.

In another place the poet relates how this Robastre was the son of a *luiton* Malabron,[2] who like the Celtic fairies has the power to change his form. This fairy father stands by Robastre in the numerous adventures wherein he distinguishes himself. Gautier, in speaking of Robastre's rôle in *Garin de Montglane* where he is the hero of the siege, says: "Il représente la force corporelle et sans intelligence au service d'une bonne cause."[3]

The conclusion to which one is led as regards these individual heroes of the Rainouart-Robastre type is that they were introduced for the sake of contrast, and incidentally to please a certain class of persons in the mediæval audience. They have certainly their value from this point of view, and still serve to-day to break the monotony of the conventional narrative of *hauts faits d'armes* performed with sword and lance. Even in the *Chanson d'Antioche* we find Peter the Hermit representing the rough element in the crusade as contrasted with the gentle mien and orderly

[1] Vid. *Doon de Maience*, p. 249, which recalls the fairy origin of characters in the Breton poems. Cf. *Yvain* (ed. Förster), 5269–73.

[2] *Gaufrey*, p. 161. Cf. Osterhage, *Ztsch. für rom. Phil.*, xi, pp. 1–21.

[3] *Epopées*, iv, p. 148.

equipment of the French knights. The man with a plain club is a positive relief!

Enough has been said to prove the importance of these *bourgeois* and unnoble types in the *chansons de geste*, whether they be regarded in a mass as in the passage from *Aiol*, or as individuals. They represent a spirit originally foreign to this poetry, but which, under the strain of social changes and the consequent demand for literary variety, necessarily gained in importance until it became one of the causes of the decline of the *genre* into vulgar commonplace.

NOTE.—Throughout the French epic poems the Lombards are ridiculed for their cowardice. They so appear in *Gaufrey*, pp. 186, 268; *Chevalerie Ogier de Danemarche*, vv. 916, 4980; *Hervis von Metz*, vv. 1410–13, 2520–21; *Girart de Viane*, p. 23; *Aymeri de Narbonne*, 3440–45: *Les Narbonnais*, 1608–11; *Renaut de Montauban*, p. 231. G. Baist (*Zeitsch. für rom. Phil.*, ii, 303–306) attributes their reputation for cowardice to jealousy of the rise of the Lombard cities in the twelfth century. He cites passages in which the Lombards are represented as fighting against snails, a curious notion upon which Adolph Tobler has thrown light (*Zeitsch. für rom. Phil.*, iii, 98–102) by quoting a passage from Giovanni Villani (ix, 110). The passages referred to indicate that the cowardice of the Lombards was a widespread joke. Of the character and flavor of this mediaeval communal humor Dr. F. B. Gummere says: "It was a thing not of individuals but of classes, guilds, cities, towns, villages, countries,—collective altogether." (*Beginnings of Poetry*, p. 160.)

THE SARACENS.

No proof of the important part played by the Saracens in the epic poetry is needed. There are barely half a dozen poems out of some two score in which the Saracens under one of their divers captions do not enter. Since the French epic poetry and the Italian court epic inspired by it contain the only considerable popular reference we have to the Saracens in Western Europe outside of Spain, it will be worth while to account for their presence in French tradition before going further.

The historical basis for the conflicts between Christians and Saracens in France is as follows.[1] The first invasion of Spain and of the region about the Eastern end of the Pyrennees dates from 711; but this first invasion left no permanent traces on French soil. More important, though unsuccessful, was the siege of Narbonne by the Saracens in 721. Established in Spain, however, and as yet undisturbed by intestine strife, the following years saw frequent raids of the Saracens into French territory. According to Arab writers Arles was attacked about 730. These raids were swift and destructive. The Saracens burned and pillaged everywhere, rifling monasteries and convents. Meanwhile, the Saracen khalif was preparing a more serious invasion of France. When in 732 the Infidels crossed the frontier in great numbers, Eudes was unable to stop them at the Dordogne. They penetrated as far as Tours before Charles Martel, defender of the weak Chilpéric II, could get to meet them. The battle was fought between Tours aud Poitiers and was decisive; for the schism in Barbary and the consequent intestine strife in Spain prevented the organization of any subsequent invading force on an equally grand scale. Charles Martel was succeeded by Pepin as Mayor of the Palace. From 752 to 759 the latter was in the South, where he succeeded in winning back Narbonne which the Saracens had captured some time before. It is to be noted that Narbonne, on account of its maritime importance, is as prominent in the historical as it is in the legendary account of these wars. The important date of the fall of Narbonne closes the first period of Saracen conquest as conceived by Reinaud. It had been one of high hope to the Saracens, of expectation and determination to win the rich kingdom of the Franks.

[1] Cf. Reinaud, *Invasions des Sarrasins en France;* E. Mercier, *La bataille de Poitiers, &c.* in *Revue hist.*, Mai, 1878; L. von Ranke, *Weltgeschichte* v. Theil, i, ii, Abtheilung; L. Gautier, *Epopées*, iv. p. 84 f.

The second period is less rosy for the Saracens, who are now a prey to the process of disintegration and disaffection. It was the rivalry among certain Saracen chiefs in Spain that accounts for Charlemagne's expedition in 778. His aid had been called for by certain Saracen ambassadors at Paderborn in 777 in favor of their cause. Pampelune was taken by siege, but Saragossa resisted (cf. *Roland*), and Charlemagne was called back to the Rhine by a fresh Saxon insurrection instigated by Witikind. During the retreat occurred the incident developed in the *Roland* and of which Eginhard has left us a brief description. L. von Ranke points out that in spite of the numerous negotiations and frequent contact between Christians and Saracens, especially as represented in Charlemagne and Haroun-al-Raschid, in reality no permanent good feeling was possible. Religious motives were at the bottom of the hostility,—a permanent stumbling-block in the way of peace.

The Saracens were, in fact, recruiting their forces at this time, and invaded the South of France in 793. Charlemagne was near the Danube at the time, and Guillaume, Count of Toulouse, led the Christian army at the disastrous battle of Villedaigne. But the Saracens were ultimately forced across the mountains, and in 801 even Barcelona was regained by the Christians.

It was not until after Louis' death that the Saracens and Normans alike profited by the divisions in the Empire to renew their piratical invasions of French soil. In 846 the Saracens were before Rome, while their devastating hordes a century later penetrated into Lombardy, Provence, and even Savoy. Popular uprisings, in which St. Bernard figured prominently,[1] in the Dauphiné and in Provence finally expelled the Saracens, and after 1050 their operations were

[1] Cf. *Le Mystère de S. Bernard de Menthon* (ed. Lecoy de la Marche, Paris, 1888), Introd., pp. ix–xii.

confined to piracy on the high seas, a trade originally totally foreign to this people of the desert.

After this brief review of the historical conflicts between the Saracens and the French in the early centuries of the French monarchy, we are better able to account for the omnipresence of the Saracen type in the *chansons de geste.*

There is no doubt that at least the older epic poems rest upon lost heroic songs which treated, in the fashion of communal poetry, episodes in the military history of the nation and its chiefs. After the Franks had become assimilated with the Christian Gallo-Roman population and were ready to devote their freshly aroused enthusiasm to this defense of the Christian faith, there was one series of conflicts in which, above all, their enthusiasm was called into play. The Saracens seem to have been considered the especial charge of the French. It was the inhabitants of the territory comprised in Cæsar's Gaul and in the *Provincia romana* who formed the bulwark against the Southern invasion of the Unbelievers. Judging from its after-effects, it is reasonable to suppose that the full significance of that check which the Saracens received at Tours from Charles Martel was perfectly realized by the national poets. In spite of Huns, Saxons and Normans, who at different times troubled the borders of the kingdom, it was the Saracens who continue to represent the typical enemy, the uncompromising foe of the true God and of the French warriors alike. For the French feudal audience the only conflict worth telling about is that between the French under the great Emperor Charlemagne and the Saracens. For the French epic is essentially a war epic, in which difference of religion furnishes the *motif.* The idea of a strife between two peoples of different religion seems to have been originally inherent in the French epic. As Gaston Paris has put it: "La grande idée qui a présidé à la formation de notre épopée . . . . peut se définir ainsi; la lutte de

l'Europe chrétienne contre les Sarrasins sous l'hégémonie de la France."[1] Basing itself upon historical facts, popular tradition singled out the Saracens to represent the permanent enemies of the French. Stray local traditions may account for a poem in which are narrated deeds which have nothing to do with the real Saracens. But so great was the tendency toward assimilation and absorption that Jean Bodel, writing toward the end of the twelfth century his *Chanson des Saisnes*, fell quite naturally into the habit of calling these northern pagans *Sarrasins*.[2] Down to the very close of our period there are two great camps of personages: the Christians and the *Sarrasins*.

All the types that we have treated thus far have belonged in the Christian ranks; we have now to deal with the Saracens, and see to what literary use they were put by the authors of the extant poems. That old uncompromising bitterness of the *Roland* will be found to have largely disappeared. As time passed, the vividness of the eighth and ninth century conflicts must have faded. The twelfth century witnessed a fresh contact between the old enemies. Under different circumstances and in far more romantic surroundings the French knight now met his opponent,—quite civilized, but still professing the hated faith. Resisting a foreign invader at Tours was a different matter from a courteous exchange of hostilities at Acre and Jerusalem. What effect the comparatively refined contact had upon the Saracens depicted in the *chansons de geste*,—upon the epic Saracens,—will be seen in the following pages. It is important to recollect, in this connection, that the Saracens as

[1] *Hist. poêt. de Charlemagne*, p. 16.

[2] So also are the Saxons spoken of in *Ogier de Danemarche;* the Normans in *Aquin* (vid. Nyrop, p. 109) and in *Le Roi Louis*, where they are called *ceus d'Islande;* the Danes in *Chron. de Phil. Mouskes;* the Albigenses in *Garin de Montglane.*

we find them in most of the epic poems are not the Saracens of Charlemagne's time. Nowhere in the poems that have come down to us do we find a perfect echo of that barbarian shock of arms with its accompanying slaughter that took place in 732. As regards even the *Roland*, the general truth of the remark made seventy years ago is evident: "La guerre contre les Mussulmans est uniquement considérée sous le point de vue des croisades. Malgré ce qui leur reste encore de dur et de barbare, les héros de Roncevaux sont en tout de véritables chevaliers, tels que les avaient faits les premières croisades: ce ne sont plus les féroces compagnons de Charlemagne."[1] The *Roland* offers the most naïve, the most primitive picture of this Christian-Saracen contact. But relations are already refined, the warriors are already delicate and courteous to such a degree that the tone of chivalry is already foreshadowed.

Thus, the crusades brought fresh life to the old poetry, while they changed its spirit. The Saracens still figured in great prominence. But increased familiarity produced less hatred, less bitterness, more respect. Consider the experience of any individual French *chevalier* who took part in the twelfth century crusades. Not only were his eyes opened in the East to a new world of oriental magnificence far exceeding his own, but he was inevitably thrown into personal relations with Infidels who were not a whit behind him in dignity, bravery and courtesy. There were fair maidens, too, usually princesses indeed, who held the Christian knight enthralled, and who gave an air of amorous adventure and romance to the expedition perhaps so prayerfully undertaken. It will be seen, then, what consequences followed upon the continued prominence of the Saracens. The following pages will show them alternately as the

[1] H. Monin, *Dissertation sur le Roman de Roncevaux* (Paris, 1832), p. 87.

worthy antagonists of the Christian knights, as a laughing-stock introducing the comic element, as the romantic characters surrounded by an exotic perfume which often served to turn the head of the French *chevalier*. But throughout the religious distinction is maintained. Faith is the touchstone.[1] There are certain limits which religion interposes, and these limits are respected.

This difference in religion is a very important item when the poet is describing a Saracen hero. It will be remembered that the Christian heroes already in the *Roland* are imbued with the spirit of a Richard Cœur de Lion or a Godefroi de Bouillon, embodying the chivalric code of faith, courage and loyalty. A feudal audience could not conceive a hero who was faithless to these ideals. Even the Saracen hero, then, was distinguished from his Christian prototype only by his religion. The familiar cry of the *trouvère* in despair is repeated throughout all the epic poems. No higher expression can be given to his admiration for a Saracen warrior than this :

"Deus ! quels vassals, s'oüst chrestientet !"

Roland, 3164.

It is quite unnecesrary to insist upon the type of Saracen hero represented in the *Roland*. Barring the difference in religion, King Marsile is a miniature Charlemagne, and Blancandrin and Ganelon as they ride along together are in congenial company. In their essential traits and in their ethical code Christians and Saracens are identical. Nevertheless, the *trouvères* made good use of the unbelieving Saracens for other purposes. When there is need of any local color, of any exotic or grotesque element, it is the Saracens who do duty. Upon a foundation of fact the *trouvères* developed a conventional superstructure of which

[1] Cf. Johann Alton in *Ausgaben und Abhandlungen*, No. 9, p. 29.

the following passages give us an idea. Note in the *Roland* the naïve description of

> "Ethiope, une terre maldite;
> La neire gent en ad en sa baillie,
> Granz unt les nes e lées les orilles,
> E sunt ensemble plus de cinquante milie." [1]
>
> *Roland*, 1916–19.

Or again of the scene—

> "Quant Rollanz veit la cuntredite gent,
> Qui plus sunt neir que nen est arremenz,
> Ne n'unt de blanc ne mais que sul les denz."
>
> *Id.*, 1932–34.

So also much later, in *Les Narbonnais*, the same conventional trait is forthcoming:

> "'Granz ont les cors et noirs com arrement,
> Longues eschines et cortes par devant.
> Les eulz ont roges come charbon ardant,
> Les groinz aguz et les danz bien tranchanz
> (Pire est lor mordres que i n'est d'un sarpant),
> Tetes menues et les oreilles granz.'"
>
> *Les Narbonnais*, 3803–08.

This grotesque trait in the portrayal of the African type will be met again, applied to individuals, as also that other scene often repeated by the *trouvères*, in which the Saracens show their violent disgust for their own gods. This latter *procédé*, as old as the destruction of the gods of Baal, could never have failed to divert a Christian audience. When Marsile returns wounded after his defeat at the hands of Charles, Bramimunde the queen and with her *plus de xxx milie humes* make a sudden raid upon their faithless gods and images:

[1] Cf. also *Roland*, 979–983, for the country of Valneire whence comes Chernuble.

"Ad Apolin current en une crute,
Tencent à lui, laidement les despersunent . . . .
Puis si li tolent sun sceptre e sa curune,
Par mains le pendent desur une culumbe,
Entre lur piez à terre le tresturnent,
A granz bastuns le batent e defruissent.
E Tervagan tolent sun escarbuncle,
E Mahumet enz en un fosset butent,
E porc e chien le mordent e defulent." [1]

Roland, 2580–91.

This is simple farce, and has no other object than to hold up to ridicule the gods in whose images the Saracens, so sensible in most respects, are foolish enough to place their trust. It is a common resort of the poets when they wish to raise a laugh. The coarse joke practised upon Macaire in *Aiol* (9630 f.) has already been referred to in a previous chapter. This childish impatience at the failure of their gods to give them material help is frequently observed. It is the counterpart of the firm belief that the God of the Christians is a God of battles and a very present help in time of trouble. Thus in *Fierabras* one disgusted Saracen cries out:

" 'Lor diex veille pour aus, moult les a bien gardez;
Mais li nostre dieu sont caitif et enivré:
Ne se pueent aidier pieça ne furent né.' "

Fierabras, p. 113.

Again the *amiral* Balant is so disgusted with the success of Charles' advance that he curses his gods:

"Une machue voit, à ii. mains l'a saisie,
Tous dervés vint courant à la mahommerie,
iii. cos en a donné Mahomet lés l'oïe,
La teste li pechoie et le col li esmie."

Id., p. 156.

After one of the battles in *Mainet* as many as ten thousand

[1] For this vulgar tradition of Mahomet's death vid. *Floovant*, 373; *Gaufrey*, 3582; *Couronnement de Louis*, 846; *Conquête de Jérusalem*, 5546; *Aiol*, 10090. (Cf. D'Ancona in *Giornale storico della Lett. ital.*, xiii, pp. 199–281.)

Syrians are baptized Christians after having had sad experience of the inefficacy of their gods, their reason being:

> " 'Car li dieus ou il crot est et bons et honestes
> Qui les honors li done et maintient et gouverne,
> Et fait croistre les blés, raverdir la verde herbe:
> Mahons et Tervagant ne valent une astele;
> Qui les croit et aoure bien en doit honis estre. . . .
> Fai nos baptisier, sire, crestien volons estre,
> Et si creons en Diu le glorious celestre
> K'en Belleem fu nés de le virge pucele.' "
>
> *Mainet*, vid. *Romania*, iv, p. 330.

So much for the semi-grotesque light in which the populace loved to regard the idolatry of the Saracens. Like Vergil,[1] Mahomet suffered a somewhat different treatment in the Middle Age at the hands of the clerks and of the popular poets. D'Ancona[2] and Renan[3] have written interesting pages upon this development of the ecclesiastical and popular legend of Mahomet. Renan thus sums up the various phases in which the Prophet appears in the mediæval writers: "Mahomet fut à la fois un sorcier, un infâme débauché, un voleur de chameaux, un cardinal qui, n'ayant pu réussir à se faire pape, inventa une nouvelle religion pour se venger de ses collègues."[4]

The faith of the Saracens, however, was not always a subject for jest. By opposing warriors in battle, the comparative merits of the two religions are freely discussed, and the Saracen is neither slower nor less eloquent than his Christian rival in coming to the defense of his gods. These wordy encounters, out of place as they usually are in a battle scene, none the less indicate the absorbing interest taken in this question of religious faith. Paltry and petty as his

[1] Cf. Comparetti, *Virgilio nel medio evo.*
[2] *Loc. cit.*
[3] *Etudes d'histoire religieuse*, 2nd. ed.
[4] Renan, *op. cit.*, p. 224.

reasonings are, owing to the ignorance of the *trouvères*, more than once the Saracen carries off the palm of eloquence. The following passages will illustrate the preoccupation of the *trouvères* with this question of religious difference. *Le Couronnement de Louis* offers one of the best of these battle-field controversies. We are here with Guillaume and the Christian army before Rome, whither they have been summoned by the pope to defend him against King Galafre and the Saracens. It is finally agreed that instead of a general battle the giant Corsolt shall represent the Saracens, while Guillaume shall represent the cause of the *sire al chaperon large*, as Galafre wittily styles the pope. The scorn of Corsolt for the God of the Christians is Miltonic in its grandeur:

" 'Quant je la sus ne puis Deu guerreier,
Nul de ses omes ne vueil ça jus laissier,
Et mei et Deu n'avons mais que plaidier:
Meie est la terre et siens sera li ciels.' "

Couronnement de Louis, 534–537.

In reply to Corsolt's insulting words Guillaume retorts:

" 'Que Mahomez, ce sevent plusor gent,
Il fu profetes Jesu omnipotent;
Si vint en terre par le mont preechant.
Il vint a Mesques trestot premierement,
Mais il bu trop, par son enivrement,
Puis le mangierent porcel vilainement.
Qui en lui creit il n'a nul buen talent.' "

Id., 847–853.

Similarly in *Aliscans* it is the adversary of Guillaume who voices the same conviction that the Christians' God has nothing to do with terrestrial affairs:

" 'Diex est lassus deseur le firmament;
Il n'a chà jus de terre plain arpent,
Ains est Mahon à son commandement.
Iciex nous done et l'orage et le vent;
Lui doit on croire et faire son talent.' "

Aliscans, 1223–27.

That model of Saracen knighthood Karahuel, in *Enfances Ogier*, after he becomes the bosom friend of Ogier still obstinately refuses to turn Christian. As they ride along together a pretty scene shows the two warriors discussing the faith to which each will remain true in his own way. Karahuel fully understands the position of Ogier:

> "'J'oi bien que vous pensés,
> Miex vorriez estre par pieces decoupés
> Que li vos Diex fust de vous adossés.'
> 'Voir, dist Ogiers, ce est certainetés.'"
>
> *Enfances Ogier*, 4453–56.

In response to the efforts made to convert him, Karahuel thanks the Christians but cannot be moved:

> "Ains leur a dit Sarrazins remanra
> Tout son vivant et Sarrazins morra."
>
> *Id.*, 7118–19.

More fiery and ending in the swift death of the Saracen king Florian, is the interview between him and Aiol (*Aiol*, 10080–98). Finally, in *Chevalerie Ogier de Danemarche*, after Ogier and his Saracen adversary have blackguarded each other and their respective gods, the Saracen says:

> "'Fols! que c'est qe tu dis?
> Ja ne querrai nul jor que soie vis
> En vostre Deu que penèrent Juis;
> Il te tuèrent, puis ne fu surrexsis:
> Ki en lui croit, il ert plus faus que bris,
> Tos ses pooirs ne vaut deus parisis.'"
>
> *Chevalerie Ogier*, 11316–21.

In these disputes the point to notice is that each party seizes upon the weakest point in the sacred personage that his opponent is defending. Thus, the Saracens emphasize the ignominious death of Christ upon the Cross; to which the Christian retorts, while granting the mission of the Heaven-sent Prophet, that Mahomet dissipated his energies

in riotous living and died a drunkard. In truth, D'Ancona[1] brings out the interesting fact that in the opinion of the Middle Age Mahometanism was a heresy of Christianity, the resemblance discovered between the New Testament and the Koran by the Christian scholars being considered to indicate that the latter was a surreptitious corruption of the former.[2]

From the vigor of the individual attempts at conversion some idea has been gained of the religious fervor which attended in the popular mind these racial conflicts. The same vigor is remarked in dealing with the masses of the Saracen armies. When they are defeated no quarter is given unless they consent to be baptized. This wholesale conversion and baptism of Saracens, in which the number of converts handled at one time fills us with amazement, is a constantly naïve feature of their portrayal in the epic poems. In the *Roland* when Charles has won the battle and taken Saragossa:

> "A mil Franceis fait bien cercer la vile,
> Les sinagoges e les mahumeries;
> A mailz de fer, à cuignées qu'il tiendrent,
> Fruissent les murs e trestutes les idles;
> N'i remaindrat ne sorz ne falserie.
> Li reis creit Deu, faire voelt sun servise,
> E si evesque les eves benéissent,
> Meinent paiens entresqu'al baptistirie.
> S'or i ad cel qui Carle cuntrediet,
> Il le fait pendre o ardeir o ocire.
> Baptiziet sunt asez plus de C. milie
> Veir chrestien, ne mais sul la réine;
> En France dulce iert menée caitive:
> Ço voelt li reis par amur cunvertisset."
>
> *Roland*, 3661–74.

[1] *Giornale storico, &c.*, xiii, pp. 199–281.

[2] Cf. further G. Schiavo, *Fede e superstizione nell' antica poesia francese* in *Ztsch. für rom. Phil.*, vol. xi ff., and R. Schroeder, *Glaube und Aberglaube in den altfranzösischen Dichtungen*, Erlangen, 1886.

This conquest, followed by conversion of the Unbelievers to the true faith, is the main object in view in the *Roland.* No mercy is shown except to the queen; and the poet hastens to explain that Charles made an exception in her favor because he wished to convert her *par amur.* The same unique condition of peace recurs throughout the epic poems, but with this difference: the sword does not so swiftly descend upon the recalcitrant Saracen; some chance is given to him to reflect and be converted rationally. The women, following perhaps the lead of the *Roland,* are always treated kindly and, after being carried off captive, usually consent to be baptized and to marry the Christian hero. We shall see presently how systematically the romantic Saracen princesses become converted, usually of their own free will. For their scruples, after all, are but skin-deep and never stand in the way of the heart's affections. Note, finally, that poetic justice is uniformly done to every Saracen hero, for whose personality and fate the sympathy of the audience has been aroused, by converting him at the close of the poem. The poet could confer no greater benefit upon his Saracen hero than to depict him as repenting of his obstinate folly and acknowledging the omnipotence of *Damnedieu* as revealed in his suffering Son.

We have seen how completely the religious interest in the epic poetry depended upon the contact of Christian and Saracen. Without the Saracens there would have been no objective point upon which to apply the religious faith and zeal of the all-conquering hosts of Charlemagne. Yet, if one were to consider the *chansons de geste* chronologically, nothing would be more striking than the gradual effacement of the intensely vital religious and warlike spirit before the spirit of romance. We still find the long prayers of the heroes, the interminable descriptions of individual combats between Christian and Saracen. But the spirit has changed,

and these are only the outward finery inherited from the old songs. The pessimistic lament of Adenet le Roi, familiar as it is in the mediæval poets of all classes, is worth quoting in this connection :

> "En ce roiaume avoit adont tel gent
> Qui pas n'amoient tant or fin ne argent,
> Ne nul avoir, k'a guerroier souvent
> Ceaus qui n'amoient le roi omnipotent,
> Mais cis usages va or moult malement,
> Car ce a faire laissent legierement
> Grant et petit partout coumunaument,
> Dont c'est pitiez, ce sachiez vraiement,
> K'es plusours n'a meillour entendement."
>
> *Enfances Ogier*, 7712–20.

Ruteboeuf reproaches his generation in similar strains for religious inactivity in his *Complainte d' Outremer*. It is not surprising, then, to find the Saracens in the late poems presented rather in a grotesque, marvelous or romantic light. The fierce rudeness of the religious epic being no longer considered sufficient, other means were taken to stimulate curiosity and interest. In the general literary reform of personages necessitated by the change of ideals regretted by Adenet and Ruteboeuf, the Saracens of course bore their part. The rôle of the Saracens changes from that of the traditional enemy of Christianity to that of the grotesque or romantic personage. This is particularly true of the crusade cycle. M. Paul Meyer has written of those "merveilleux récits, dans lesquels les Sarrasins étaient représentés non plus comme des mécréants indignes de vivre, mais comme des émules, parfois comme les auxiliaires des chrétiens."[1] This change is partly attributable to the general change in literary taste in the twelfth century, but more especially as it affected the Saracens, it is due to the increased familiarity and respect between the two peoples in the Orient.

[1] Vid. *Daurel et Beton*, Préface, p. xx.

As one might expect in popular poetry, the numbers of fighting-men are vastly exaggerated. This is especially true of the Saracens. Jean Bodel expresses the general opinion when he makes Baudouin say of the *Saisnes* (Saracens):

> " 'Sire, dist Baudouins, Saisne ont molt grant foison ;
> N'an savons tant ocire que plus en i trovon.' "
> *Chanson des Saisnes*, v. ii, p. 130.

Very pleasing is the simile in *Anseïs de Carthage* where we are told of the Saracens:

> " Des tentes issent aussi espesement
> Come li pluie, quant le cachent li vent."
> *Anseïs von Karthago*, 6658–59.

The *trouvères* doubtless exaggerated their numbers in order to produce a contrast. The Saracens come down upon Christendom in hordes, and have no less audacious pretensions than the possession of St. Denis and the subjugation of the French. To an audience of the eleventh and twelfth century this audacity could not fail to seem preposterous. In the *Roland* at the council of the Saracen kings, one of them boasts:

> " 'Carles li vielz à la barbe flurie,
> Jamais n'iert jurns qu'il n'en ait doel e ire.
> Jusqu'à un an avrum France saisie,
> Gesir porrum el burc de Seint-Denise.' "
> *Roland*, 970–73.

Similarly *Gaufrey*, p. 35; *Les Narbonnais*, 3692–94; *Aiol*, 4064–72.

In the preceding chapter we noticed certain grotesque traits which belong to the heroes of the Rainouart-Robastre type. Physically different from the latter is the grotesque Saracen type occasionally met. Here there is added an element of awful hideousness. Take the portrait of the giant Corsolt in the *Couronnement de Louis:*

"L'en li ameine le rei Corsolt en pié,
Lait et anché, hisdos come aversier;
Les uelz ot roges com charbon en brasier,
La teste lee et herupé le chief;
Entre dous ueilz ot de lé demi pié,
Une grant teise de l'espalle al braier;
Plus hisdos om ne puet de pain mangier."

Couronnement de Louis, 504–510.

So also Tornebeuf in *Aiol* (3983–88) and Tabur in the *Chancun de Willame* (3171–75). But the most detailed portrait is that of the *mal paien Nasier* in *Gaufrey:*

"xiiii. piés avoit en estant l'aversier,
Et de large ot la toise à i. grant chevalier,
La teste avoit plus grosse assez d'un buef plenier,
Et si estoit plus noir que meure de meurier;
Les iex avoit plus rougez que carbon en brasier,
Le cheveus herupés, pongnans comme esglentier;
Qui bien l'esgarderoit, bien devroit esragier.
En une des narines du nés, lés le joier,
Pourroit on largement un oef d'oue muchier;
En sa bouche enterroit i. grant pain de denier;
Bien menjast i. mouton tout seul à un mengier;
Et je que vous diroie? ch'estoit i. aversier."

Gaufrey, p. 90.

Last to make their appearance in a leading part are the Saracen women. The Saracen maid does not differ essentially from her Christian sister. The *trouvères* were no more able to imagine a Saracen type of female beauty and charm distinct from that of the Christian than they were able to create a Saracen hero who should not be identical with a Christian chevalier. Yet, the introduction of Saracen women, in the poems of the thirteenth century especially, is significant. The conviction has already been expressed that the treatment of the Saracens in the epic poems as we have them was affected by the contact of the two races in the East rather than in the West. From the first the Saracens had a place reserved for them in the conventional scheme of the epic

poets. It was understood that they were to represent the conventional enemies of Christendom. In the early poems we have seen that the feminine element was either totally neglected or relegated to a minor position. Hence, we find only warriors among the Saracens as among the Christians. But the audiences of the late twelfth and thirteenth centuries were no longer satisfied with combats alone and with heroic deeds from which the feminine element was completely absent. The cult of chivalry required that the bravery and devotion of man should be expended and consecrated in favor of some woman.

Given the rôle of the Saracens in this poetry from the outset, it is not surprising to find in the late poems the Saracen women occupying a prominent place. In fact, there was a special reason why it should be so. The change in life and literary taste had introduced in the middle of the twelfth century an interest in romance and adventure, while increased commerce with and knowledge of the Eastern world induced a craving for what the Romantic School has since called *l'exotisme*. To both of these new literary demands a well elaborated episode between a Christian hero and a Saracen princess perfectly responded. How interesting to the unpampered literary taste of the period was an adventure in which the lovers met and wedded under such romantic circumstances! The breach between the old and the new style of *chanson de geste* is very considerable, and the difference depends almost entirely upon the growing importance of woman in the hero's life.

To better realize this, we need only recall the stray references to Saracen princesses in the earliest poems. They are the proper ancestors of the later Flordépine, Floripas and Rosamonde. In the *Roland* all we are told of Bramimunde is that she figured among the prisoners taken by Charles (3680–81). At a later date we should have had

the bravest of the French knights woo and wed her. When Ganelon has been put out of the way, Charles' mind again reverts to the captive queen:

> "La baptizierent la réine d'Espaigne,
> Truvet li unt le num de Juliane.
> Chrestiene est par veire conuissance."
>
> *Roland*, 3985–87.

The last verse contains the important information. We are not told that she married any Christian peer. Again, in the *Voyage de Charlemagne* we may consider the daughter of the Emperor Hugo a Saracen princess for our present purpose. Oliver wins, to be sure, the love of this Jacqueline; but no point is made of it. The poet absolutely fails to develop the romantic episode. The accomplishment of Oliver's *gab* (705–726), though not without a certain graceful gallantry, redounds entirely to his own prodigious valor as a wooer. The two later passages (822–826; 852–857) in which the girl is mentioned are strikingly undeveloped.

With these primitive undeveloped portraits of Saracen women in mind, we can better gauge the significance of their treatment in the later poems.

It is easy to understand now why the *trouvère* devoted himself almost exclusively to the Saracen maiden, and to her as princess. No other type could have consorted with the type of Christian hero already given. They are all paragons of beauty, they are usually more forward in their amorous declarations than we would have them, and they end regularly by being baptized and marrying the hero. In a word, they may be thus described. But the *trouvère* expended all his talent upon these foreign beauties; and to fill out one's ideas of the *trouvère's* literary skill and of his response to contemporary taste, one is bound to glance at some of these Saracen women. It will be seen that they are distinguished from some of the women described in a preceding chapter only by their religion.

First among the Saracen women, judging from the charming character elsewhere attributed to her as Guibourc the wife of Guillaume, is Orable. In the *Prise d' Orange*, composed to throw light upon the early history of Guillaume, there is an early illustration of this shifting of interest from the heroic to the romantic. Guillaume falls in love with Orable by hear-say[1] and risks his life to see her and talk with her. It is Orable who saves Guillaume's life when his ruse is discovered, and protects him until his companions arrive from Nîmes and take the city. Orable, of course, becomes a Christian and marries Guillaume, according to rule. It is not hard to see that, though the epic *moule* is preserved, it is the wooing of Guillaume and Orable, not the taking of Orange, that forms the interest of the poem. The poet was fully aware of the transformation he had wrought in the heroic figure of Guillaume in making him a wooer, when he says:

> "'L'en soloit dire Guillaume Fièrebrace,
> Or dira l'en Guillaume l'amiable.
> En ceste vile par amistié entrastes.'"
>
> *Prise d' Orange*, 1562–64.

No less attractive than Orable is Mirabel, once a Saracen but easily converted under Aiol's tutelage. Their adventures are of an improbable nature, but the poet has made a very flesh and blood creature of Mirabel. She is quite remarkable for her virtue, humility, courage and humanity. Like a few other women in this mediæval poetry she was something of a scholar:

> "Ele sut bien parler de xiiii. latins:
> Ele savoit parler et grigois et hermin,
> Flamenc et borgengon et tout le sarrasin,
> Poitevin et gascon, se li vient a plaisir."
>
> *Aiol*, 5420–23.

[1] So Garin with the Christian Mabile in *Garin de Montglane*, and frequently in the *romans d' aventure*.

The account of their wanderings together, of their hunger and privations, is well done. It is the more natural because it is Aiol who carries off the girl, in this case against her will:

"'O moi venrés en Franche en la terre garnie,
Puis vous prendrai a feme, se Dex le me destine.'"
Id., 5404–05.

Such proximity was likely to produce a change in the young woman's way of thinking; for Aiol was brave and fair:

"Bien avés oi dire et as uns et as autres
Que feme aime tost home qui bien fiert en bataille:
Ele li escria, qu'il l'entent en l'angarde:
'Sire, venés vous ent qui preus estes as armes;
Por vous querra je Dieu le pere esperitable.'"
Id., 5596–5600.

And, in fact, a little later (6240–71) she delivers herself of a prayer to *Sire Abraham* which would do credit to a life-long Christian. But Mirabel is human, and the poet is happy in giving the dialogue of the young pair in their destitution:

"La pucele fu lasse, se li greva li caus;
Ele vint a Aiol, si l'en araisona:
'Gentieus damoiseus sire, et de moi que sera?
Je ne mengai her soir ne hui trois jors i a!'
'Bele, che dist Aiols li preus et li loials,
Ne vos ai que doner, foi que doi saint Tumas!
Vés la tere gastee et le pais tout ars.'"
Id., 5622–28.

The close of this long poem, which relates the triumph of an ideal knight over a series of difficulties, shows Aiol and Mirabel and their two sons reunited after years of separation. Then it is that Mirabel, like Guibourc in *Aliscans*, asks her husband if he has been true to her:

"'Sire, vous fustes fors de la cartre perine,
Et Dieus vous en geta, li fiex sainte Marie.
Vous avés or, je quic, autre feme reprisse,

U vous avés piecha faite novele amie.'
'Bele, che dist Aiols, vous parlés de folie.
Je vous plevis par foi et jure sainte Marie,
Puis que parti de vous, n'oc feme a compaignie.'"

Id., 10951–57.

Another of the same type is Rosamonde in *Elie de Saint Gille*. Very poetically conceived is the scene in which she first sees and succors the Christian hero Elie. The latter, wearied with fighting against the Saracens, goes with his squire Galopin to rest in an orchard hard by. At daybreak Rosamonde, already more than half disposed to embrace Christianity, is at her balcony breathing in the fresh morning air:

"Rosamonde s'estut sus el palais autor
Et vint a la fenestre por oir la douchour
Des oissellons menus qui chantoient al jor;
L'euriel et la merle ot chanter sor l'aubor,
Le cri del rousingol, se li sovient d'amor:
'Vrais Dieus, dist la pucele, con tu es presious!
Tu fais croistre les arbres, porter foilles et flors,
Et le blé nous fais sourdre de la terre en amour,
Et en la sainte viergene presis anonsion,
Biaus sire, et sanc et char i presistes por nous.
Aussi con chou est voirs, biaus sire glorious,
Desfendés le Franchois de mort et de prison.'"

Elie de Saint Gille, 1365–76.

When she catches sight of Elie:

"Tous les degrés avale, si est venue a tere
Et desfreme i. guicet d'une fauce posterne,
Par u ele sieut issir et les soies pucheles,
Quant vient el mois de mai, por colir la florete.
Venue est a Elye qui se pasme sor tere,
Son cief li a lor mis par desous son brac destre,
Puis l'en a apelé la cortoisse puchele:
'Qui es tu chevalier?'"

Id., 1404–11.

After Elie has been promptly healed with precious herbs, Rosamonde leads him away to her own apartments where she bathes and dresses him:

"Rosamonde la bele par les flans l'enbracha,
Sor i. lit l'a asis geteis a cristal;
XL. fois li baisse et le vis et la char.
Cil li guenchi la bouche, que el n'i adesa:
'Galopin, dist Elies, vois quel feme chi a?
U roialme de Franche si gente nen avra.'"

Id., 1468–73.

The Saracen princesses are certainly not lacking in vigor when they have set their mind upon a Christian knight for their lover. The latter must have possessed every recommendation to have produced such an immediate effect upon the hearts of those who were separated from them by the great barrier of religion. In *Gaufrey* the beautiful Flordépine is willing to do anything for the Christians provided she can win Berart for her lover:

"'Et par la foi que doi nostre Dieu Baraton,
Se vous povez tant fere que j'aie le baron
Berart du Mont Didier a la clere fachon,
(On dit qu'il n'a si bel en Franche le roion),
Vous serés delivré hors de cheste prison,
Que je l'aim si forment, ja ne le cheleron,
Que pour l'amour de li deguerpiroi Mahon,
Et si crerrei en Dieu qui souffri passion.'"

Gaufrey, pp. 57, 58.

Flordépine will not allow the caresses of her Saracen lover (pp. 59, 60), for her one idea is to win Berart.

A relief in the tedious poem of *La Prise de Cordres et de Sebille* is offered by the Saracen princess Nubie who, won by the beauty of Bertran, plans the delivery of the Christians. She too will change her faith out of love for her new master:

"'E! Deus,' dist elle, 'li filz sainte Marie,
Por vostre amour recevrai baptistire,
Mais que me rent dan Bertran a delivre.'"

La Prise de Cordres et de Sebille, 751–53.

A variation of the conventional situation is Gloriande in *Les Enfances Ogier*. She is betrothed to that excellent

Saracen knight Karahuel, the friend of Ogier. We are expecting Gloriande's affections to shift in favor of Ogier. But here Adenet surprises us by keeping Gloriande faithful to her first lover, whom she finally marries (7601–31). And Adenet says that nothing more is surely known of them, but that if ever anyone deserved God's blessing it is this pair of Saracen lovers:

> "Et Diex le vueille par sa douce amisté,
> Et s'il ainc fist gent paienne bonté,
> Plaire li vueille que il d'aus ait pité,
> Car se valoir i povoit loiauté,
> Estre devroient devant Dieu corouné."
>
> *Enfances Ogier*, 7642–46.

Another of the same type as Flordépine is Floripas in *Fierabras*. Here, again, the king's daughter is in league with the Christian knights, whose lives she spares because of her love for Gui de Bourgogne:

> "'Or voel que tout ensamble vos fois ne plevirés
> Que vous ferés mon boin sans nul point de fauser,
> Et de ce m'aiderés que je vorrai rouver.'"
>
> *Fierabras*, p. 84.

She has no trouble in persuading them to gratify her, since she controls the situation. It is to Roland she speaks of her love for Gui:

> "'Je aim en douce France i. leger baceler.'
> 'Dame, comment a nom?' ce dist Rollans li ber.
> Et respont la puciele: 'Ja le m'orrés nommer;
> Guis a nom de Borgoigne, moult i a bel armé.'
> 'Par mon cief, dist Rollans, à vos ex le vées;
> N'a pas entre vous deus iiii. piés mesurés.'
> 'Sire, dist Floripas, cel voel quel me donnés.'
> 'Par mon cief, dist Rollans, à vostre volenté.'"
>
> *Id.*, p. 85.

Gui has scruples about engaging his faith without Charles' permission. But Floripas swears by Mahomet:

"'Se vous ne me prenés,
Je vous ferai tous pendre et au vent encruer!'"
Id., p. 85.

This argument is conclusive, and Floripas readily consents to be baptized and believe in Jesus (pp. 85, 86). Then she puts her arms about his neck, but does not kiss him:

"Pour ce k'ele est paiene, il est crestiennés."
Id., p. 86.

This last verse suggests the last observation to be made in regard to the treatment of the Saracen women. However fiery and uncontrollable may appear the passion of a Christian knight for a Saracen woman, or *vice versa*, one rule was generally observed: there is no intercourse between them until the woman has been baptized. Intercourse with an Unbeliever is universally discountenanced. No great inconvenience resulted, however, as the Saracen woman was more than ready to make the slight sacrifice required. It was only necessary to perform the prescribed rites of the Church. The relations of Aiol and Mirabel offer a typical instance. After Aiol has rescued Mirabel and carried her off, the moment of temptation comes. The poet dilates upon the beauty of the maiden as she lay on the greensward beside her lover:

"Aiols li fieus Elie le prist a regarder,
Ens en son cuer le prist forment a enamer:
Ja le vausist baisier s'eust kerstienté,
Mais por chou qu'ert paiene, ne le vaut adeser:
La loi au roi Jesu ne voloit vergonder,
Ançois le voloit faire baptisier et lever,
Si le prendroit a feme, a mollier et a per."
Aiol, 5452–58.

Such a naïvely delicate scene as this shows how vital was the force of religion in controlling the passions and appetites of this age when, in most matters, might made right. Rarely was it that the poets dared to go against this popular demand for continence between persons of different creeds.

An instance of this conviction, though no longer strong enough to be effective, is found as late as the fourteenth century in *Li Bastars de Buillon*. Though Bauduin is already married, the Saracen Synamonde determines to have him for her lover. His reasons for at first resisting her overtures are that he is already married and *que ne doi abiter a dame sarrasine* (2568 f.). The first reason had little effect in these degenerate days of the French epic, and the second scruple is quashed by Synamonde claiming that she is a Christian at heart. This sudden discovery on the part of Synamonde nicely settles the knotty question of conscience, and accounts for the appearance in the crusade cycle of the *Bastart de Buillon*.

But two notable infringements of this law have been remarked. One is in *Anseïs de Carthage* (5031 f.) in a passage similar to that in the *Chanson des Saisnes* (vol. i, p. 107 f.) and in *Beuves de Commarchis* (2680 f.). In all of these the women take the initiative. In *Anseïs de Carthage* it is the very wife of King Marsile who, with her maids, sends at night for the Christian Raimon and two of his knights to come and do their pleasure. This they do, apparently without compunction.

The other case of exception is that in the strange poem of *Huon de Bordeaux*. Here Esclarmonde burns for Huon, this brazen Christian who, in the execution of his orders from Charlemagne, stops at no adventure. At first he is faithful to his conviction:

> "'Dame, dist Hues, laisiés tot çou ester;
> Sarrasine estes, je ne vous puis amer.
> Je vous baisai, çou est la verités,
> Mais je le fis por ma foi aquiter,
> Car ensi l'oi à Karlon créanté.
> Se devoie estre tos jors emprisonés
> En ceste cartre tant con porai durer,
> Ne quier jou ja à vo car adeser.'"
>
> *Huon de Bordeaux*, p. 175.

In spite of this good resolution, the little fairy Auberon knows Huon's weakness and forbids all intercourse with Esclarmonde until they shall have been married in Rome (p. 200). Once on the sea Huon's passions run away with him, and with his eyes open he sins. Straightway, in accordance with mediæval superstition, a tempest breaks upon the sea and the two lovers are cast upon a solitary island (p. 202). The poet has tried to excuse this breach of the conventions by an allusion to the all-consuming passion of Tristram and Iseult. Huon tries to comfort Esclarmonde thus:

> " 'Acolons nous, se morrons plus soef.
> Tristrans morut por bele Iseut amer,
> Si ferons nous, moi et vous, en non Dé.' "
>
> *Id.*, p. 203.

They do not die; but many a misfortune comes to Huon for having disobeyed the advice of Auberon.

To conclude, we have shown that any traditions of the Saracens in France which may have been current before the eleventh century, have been completely recolored subsequently by the contact of the two races in the Orient. Moreover, the poets failed to distinguish perceptibly between the Christian and the Saracen character. Finally, there is distinctly traceable a change of function in the Saracen regarded as a literary type. Coming to view in the *Roland* as an unbelieving chevalier, the uncompromising enemy of the Christians' God, he ends by embodying together with his daughter, the conventional princess, all that the *trouvère* could imagine of a romantic and exotic nature. In other words, the Saracens conform to the new literary demand of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. No longer exclusively represented as the enemies of the Most High, to be slaughtered or converted on a grand scale, they are to be respected and converted if possible, in any case to be met on equal terms. It is perhaps not too much to say that the

change in the rôle of the Saracens stands for that weakening of the religious conscience and the birth of a more generous humanity which followed upon the crusades in Western Europe.[1]

Conclusion.

An attempt has been made in the preceding pages to trace, by simple expository methods, the development which the *chansons de geste* passed through during the period of their greatest popularity. A study of the personages offers, as has been seen, the best opportunity to penetrate the spirit of the poems. For the personages readily group themselves into types. It is especially true of the older poems that "the great emotions and convictions are presented in types and symbols; multitudes of persons are represented by colossal figures, the range and compass of whose lives create an impression of universality."[2]

We have had, then, nothing to prove. The general truth is known in regard to the transformation which took place in the *chansons de geste* as the result of contemporary changes in social, political, and literary ideals. The division of the personages into types is, we believe, original; it is hoped that by this division clearness has been gained in determining how far and in what way the spirit of the national epic was altered.

The value of the *chansons de geste* as literary monuments depends upon their origin, and upon the peculiar society whose ideals they express. Of all the literary currents which contributed to form the distinctive product known as French literature, the *chansons de geste* alone in the

[1] Cf. Alfred Nutt, *Celtic and Mediæval Romance*, p. 15.

[2] Hamilton Mabie, *Essays in Literary Interpretation*, p. 1.

Middle Age represent the Teutonic current. Other features of French literature find their sources in the classic tradition, in the native *gaulois* residue, in the Celtic innovations, as the case may be. The heroic note, the epic note of self-sacrifice and religious devotion harks back to the Frankish ancestors of those feudal lords who applauded the *Chanson de Roland.* Of Teutonic inspiration, the *chansons de geste* are yet profoundly national, profoundly French.[1] They are the vigorous literary assertion of the new nationality formed by the contact of two civilizations. Shaking itself free from its Germanic *impedimenta,* the French spirit reveals itself on tip-toe ready to strike out its own course. To the historian of literature this is the strongest claim for recognition put forward by the French *chansons de geste.* In closing we may revert to the words of Gaston Paris placed at the head of this study: "Le moyen âge forme un anneau indispensable dans la chaîne de la transmission littéraire à travers les siècles."[2]

WILLIAM WISTAR COMFORT.

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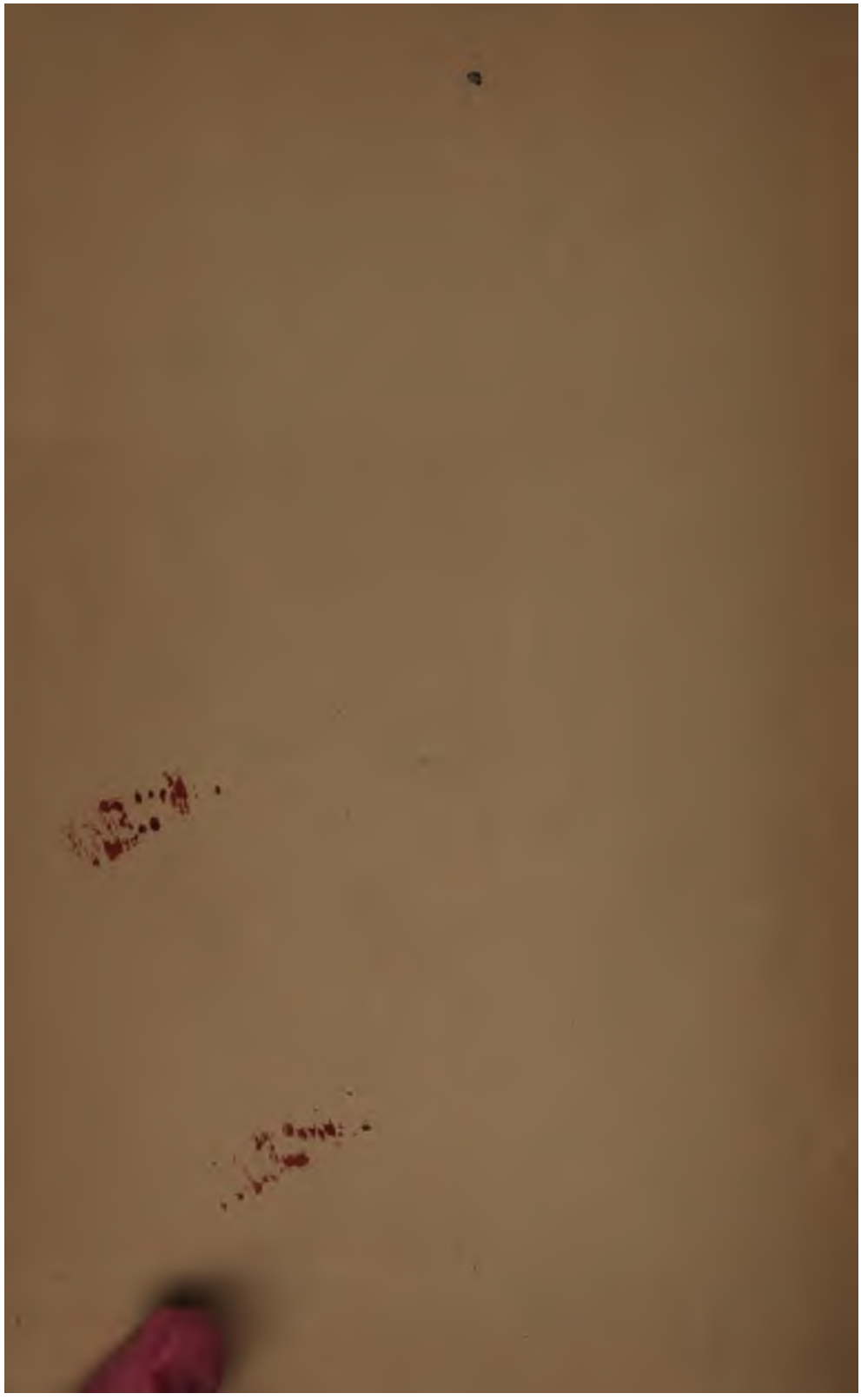

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